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[Introductory page i]

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[Introductory page ii]

MARRIAGE AND ADOPTION IN A HOKKIEN VILLAGE

A Thesis
Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School
of Cornell University for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

By
Arthur Paul Wolf
September 1964

[Title page]
[page i]

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

114 Arthur P. Wolf was born in Santa Rosa, California, on March 2,
1932. After graduating from Santa Rosa Junior College in 1952, he was
granted Preferment by the Telluride Association and transferred to
Cornell University. He graduated from Cornell in 1953 with English
literature as his major. The following fall he entered the Cornell
Graduate School as a student in the Department of Anthropology, and
held a Teaching Assistantship in that Department during the years
114 1954-56. In 1956 he was awarded a Foreign Area Training Fellowship for
122 a year of graduate study at Stanford University, and in the following
year an Inter-University Fellowship for Field Training in Spoken
Chinese. The period 1958-1961 was devoted to a field study of a
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Anthropology and Psychology, and for the past two years has held an
appointment in these Departments as an Assistant Professor.

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NOTE

The informants' names given in the text are coded names. If some person now living in the village of Hsiachichou or its vicinity should bear a name appearing here, this should be regarded as an accidental association. The author has in no case used the actual name of any informant quoted in this work.

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dissertation.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

*121 In the great majority of human societies one finds that the family is a well defined social body with a definite membership, and in every human society in which such a body exists this membership varies over time. New members are added to the family roster as its women bear children, and the older members of the family die and thus surrender at least their active membership. Over these sources of variation in the composition of the family human societies exert only a very limited degree of control. In only a few societies do contraceptive techniques and infanticide provide any appreciable degree of control over the growth of the family, and in no human society are the members of the family able to regulate its diminuation by death. Such control of the composition of the family as can be exerted takes the form of rules governing the transfer of persons from one family unit to another. Here one finds an abundance of prescriptions and preferences. The timing of such transfers, the elegibility of persons to change their status, the future relationship between the two families, the status of the new member in the receiving family, the process by which such transfers are carried out: everywhere these are the subjects of more or less precise social codes, legal prescriptions, and both formal and informal customs.

When these rules are concerned with the transfer of rights in children we refer to them as adoption, and when their subject is the

*121 creation of sexual and economic bonds between a man and woman we speak of them as marriage. Although they vary from one society to another in their application and in the means by which they are implemented, one can say that in any society the human family is to a large extent a product of these two sets of rules. Within the limits set by the natural forces of birth and death, the rules of marriage and adoption are largely responsible for the composition of the family. They state when it is that a man may take a wife or a woman a husband; they often prescribe where they shall live after they are married; and they also commonly decide the allocation of their children. Furthermore, the rules of marriage and adoption are also in large part responsible for governing the structure of the family. They define the reciprocal obligations of husband and wife; they regulate the relationship between the husband and his wife's parents on the one side and between the wife and her husband's parents on the other; and they also govern the duties and perogatives of those children who are transferred into the family. If what is meant by social structure is "any arrangement of persons in institutionalized relationships," it is primarily in terms of marriage and adoption that readjustments of the structure of a family can be made.[1] These rules govern the time at which such adjustments can be made, the nature of the social relations to be created, and they also spell out the ritual procedures for carrying out such adjustments.

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[1] A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, "Introduction," in A. R. Radcliffe-Brown and Daryll Forde (eds.), African Systems of Kinship and Marriage, (London: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 43.

*121 Since the very inception of anthropology as an academic discipline, one of the concerns of its practitioners has been the great variation in rules of marriage and adoption. Why do some societies have one set of rules, while other societies have very different and even contrary rules? Why in some societies is it prescribed that a newly married couple will live with the groom's parents, while in another society they are told to reside with the bride's parents or her mother's brother? Why is marriage with the mother's brother's daughter preferred in some societies, marriage with the father's sister's daughter in others? Why do some societies reward the man who is able to support several wives, and yet others punish anyone daring to attempt a plural marriage? Why do some societies allow the free and easy transfer of rights in children, while others create agencies to attend to the careful regulation of such transfers? Recognizing the importance of the family as the social context in which most human beings spend the majority of their lives, anthropologists have felt compelled to explain why the family varies fromone society to another.

While we do not mean to imply that this attention has been misdirected, it has apparently been responsible for a lack of concern with a related problem. Although most societies prefer one form of marriage and adoption, these preferred forms are not always prescribed as the only way in which transfers between families may be made. In many societies one finds alternative forms of marriage and adoption which are also socially recognized and accepted. Before the great transformations of the last several decades, local customs in most

*121 areas of China allowed several distinct forms of marriage. Aside from
*121 what we will hereafter refer to as the preferred patrilocal marriage,
171 in which an adult woman married and became a member of her husband's household, customs in most areas of the country also recognized some form of matrilocal marriage.[2] On the plains west of Kunming Fei and Chang found that families who had no sons, and sometimes even those who did have sons, could arrange for a daughter to "take a husband into her father's house, so that she may have children to perpetuate the family line." According to local custom, the man who entered into such a marriage "changes his surname and retains the name he receives from his father as the last word of his personal name." His first son would usually "take his mother's surname, but subsequent children are free to choose their father's original surname." "If they do so, however, they will not be entitled to inherit land from their mother's line."[3] Similarly, a family in North China might "adopt" a son-in-law for a daughter if they did not have male offspring of their own, and in at least some regions of the north a family whose married son died might arrange a matrilocal marriage for their daughter-in-law. Among the southern Chinese matrilocal institutions were even more common and more highly differentiated. Maurice Freedman finds that even today the Hokkien farmers of Singapore recognize at least three distinct

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[128] [2] Since the use of the terms "patrilocal" and "matrilocal" is standard in anthropological writing on China, I have here preferred them to the more current terms "virilocal" and "uxorilocal."

[3] Hsiao-tung Fei and Chih-i Chang, Earthbound China (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited, 1948), p. 113.

#121 171 forms of matrilocal marriage. "One extreme category embraces husbands who, from a structural point of view, may be considered male brides." Such a husband is said "to *boe* *toa-teng*, to sell the great lantern, for he resigns his proper place under the house-lantern which bears his own surname and goes out to beget children who will take the surname of his father-in-law." At the other extreme is what is often referred to in Amoy-Hokkien as *chin-tsoe*, "a custom by which a man goes on marriage to live with his wife's people without any prejudice to his rights as a father." And, finally, "between these two extreme categories of matrilocal marriage lies another in which the husband, while, as in the case of the *chin-tsoe*, having full rights over his children is committed to definite economic obligations towards his parents-in-law." A man who makes such a marriage "receives his bride on the understanding that he will live in her parents' household and support them as long as they live."[4]

Another common alternative to a formal bethrothal and wedding was the practice of taking prospective daughters-in-law into the home as small children. In the silk producing regions of the Yangtze plain, for example, Fei discovered that the parents of a male child often took a girl "as foster child at a very early age, the future mother-in-law even feeding her at her breast..." In such cases, "all the elaborate proceedings such as match-making, marriage gifts, the sending

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[4] Maurice Freedman, *Chinese Family and Marriage in Singapore*, (London: H.M.F.O., 1957), pp. 122-123.

* 121 of the meeting-boat and sedan chair, will not be needed..."[5] Similarly, 171 it was common in the Taihang Mountains of North China for a bride "to leave home as a child, immediately on betrothal, to live with her future husband's family." "The actual wedding ceremony, which would then be performed while the young couple were still in their teens, would be only a simple affair, with just a few close relatives invited to a meal."[6] Such marriages were also common in South China, and particularly among the Amoy-Hokkien speaking populations of Fukien and Taiwan. Uzuru Okada's 1934-5 survey of 148 farm families living in a rural district near the present city of Taipei indicates that nearly a fourth of all the unmarried girls in the area were children who had been adopted as "little daughters-in-law."[7]

Everywhere in China one could also find a variety of forms of adoption, each possessed of a distinctive ritual and an appropriate nomenclature. Girls adopted as prospective daughters-in-law were everywhere distinguished from girls who were adopted as daughters. The prospective daughter-in-law was eligible to marry a son of her foster family and retained her status as a daughter of her natal family, while the girl adopted as a daughter broke all ties with her natal family and acquired the same status as a child born into her

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[5] Hsiao-tung Fei, Peasant Life in China, (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1939), p. 53.

[6] Izabel and David Crook, Revolution in a Chinese Village (Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited, 1959), p. 10.

[7] Uzuru Okada, Kiso Shaki, ("The foundations of society"), (Tokyo, Japan: Kobundo). See chart on page 8.

*121 foster family. Local custom in most areas of the country also recognized
171 two distinct forms of male adoption, the criterion in this case being the relationship between the child's foster family and his natal family. If the two families were agnates, the adoption fell into one category; while if they were not, it belonged to another. Generally speaking, the child's status in his foster family was much the same regardless of the form of the adoption, but the nature of the transaction itself was very different in the two cases. In the first case, the adopting family did not give more than token remureration to the boy's parents, perhaps not more than a few dollars in a red envelope, while in the second the adopting family had to pay dearly for the child. The difference is reflected in the verbs used to denote the two acts of adoption. When a child was adopted from an agnate, the act of adoption was referred to with the term *chī*, a verb which is ordinarily rendered in English with some form of the verb "to adopt," whereas the act of obtaining a child from a non-agnate was more commonly spoken of in terms of the verb *bu̍e*, the most common meaning of which is simply "to buy."[8]

*121 Such a variety of alternative forms of marriage and adoption
*583
*597 created for most Chinese families a number of recurring decisions
171

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104 [8] Since the present study is concerned with an Amoy-Hokkien speaking community, all linguistic forms have been romanized following the Hokkien pronounciation. Place names, on the other hand, follow the post office spellings. For a description of the Hokkien transcription used here see Nicholas C. Bodman, *Spoken Amoy Hokkien* (Kuala Lampur, Federation of Malaya: Charles Grenier & Son Limited, 1955).

*121 *583 *597 191 about their membership. If they had a son they could obtain a wife for him by means of the preferred patrilocal marriage, or they could choose to adopt a girl and raise her as his wife. A daughter might be married out of the family as a young adult; she might be used as a means of bringing a son-in-law into the family; or the family might decide not to raise the girl at all. In this case, they could give her to a family which wanted to raise a girl as a daughter-in-law, or, if they preferred, they could give her to another family which wanted a daughter. A family so unfortunate as to not bear any children might choose to perpetuate their line in any one of a number of ways. They could adopt a daughter and later arrange a matrilocal marriage for her, or they could adopt a son and arrange some form of patrilocal marriage. This boy might either be purchased from a stranger, or he might be adopted from an agnate; and his wife might either be a girl obtained in the preferred way, or she might be adopted as a child and raised in the family. While a family would not encounter all of these alternatives in any one generation, they would over the course of several generations have to choose among most of them.

*121 Why did some families choose to marry their daughter out of the family, while others preferred to arrange a matrilocal marriage? Why did some families adopt girls and raise them as wives for their sons, while others waited until their sons' maturity to select their wives? When we ask such questions as these we are inquiring into the origins of social structure. The decision of a Chinese family to adopt a girl and raise her as a wife for one of their sons involved a choice between

121 [171] two very different social arrangements. In the case of Kaihsienkung in Chekiang Province, for example, the affinal ties created by the preferred form of marriage were "very loose and in many cases entirely eliminated" in the "little daughter-in-law" or siaosiv form of marriage.[9] Moreover, the two forms of marriage resulted in very different domestic relations. In the case of the preferred form of marriage, conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law was so common that "friction between them is taken as usual and harmony as worth special praise."[10] In the case of the siaosiv form of marriage, on the other hand, the girl was brought up by her future mother-in-law and became "very closely attached to the latter and feels towards her just like a daughter," the result being that "conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is often not so acute, even if not entirely avoided."[11]

In societies in which there are alternative forms of marriage and adoption the structure of the family is to some extent a product of those factors which make people likely to choose one or another of these alternatives. In at least this limited sense one may say that the study of these decisions is a study of the origins of social structure, but there is another way in which social structure may be said to be a product of such decisions. In any society the rules which

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[9] Hsiao-tung Fei, Peasant Life in China, op. cit., p. 54.

[10] Ibid., p. 48.

[11] Ibid., p. 54.

*|2| govern the transfer of persons between families must ultimately depend upon the frequency with which these rules are activated. Although such rules are absolute for most people most of the time, it is nonetheless true that no set of rules can long endure the absence of application. In the realm of human behavior, nothing kills like neglect. Also, despite the general conservatism of most societies, that which is not widely recognized and accepted will become so if it is widely practiced. Just as the gallant grammarian has been forced by practice to abandon his efforts to defend a distinction between the auxiliaries "will" and "shall," so he will undoubtedly lose his current fight to maintain the autonomy of "who" and "whom". The fact that any given practice is sanctioned by custom may help to insure its continued observance, but such sanctions are only one of the factors which decide the fate of a practice. If there are other considerations which operate to make some alternative practice more popular, it will inevitably replace its favored rival as the right and proper way of doing the thing. While it is true that the rules of a society regulate practice, it is also true that they are a recognition of practice.

We might say, then, that it is in decisions between alternative forms of marriage and adoption that the character of the family is molded. It is here that families choose between the various structures they might implement, and it is also here that the rules defining the alternatives themselves are accepted and rejected. One of the principal tasks of the social anthropologists ought, therefore, to be the study of these decisions, for it is at this point in the social process that

121 the potential determinants of social structure compete for influence. To make our point in another way, what we are suggesting is that the question of why a society has a particular form of the family might best be asked in the form of why one alternative practice is more popular than another. The existing social structure of a particular community as well as the rules which govern this structure are ultimately the result of decisions about alternative practices, and it is therefore crucial to know what it is that makes any one choice more or less attractive than any other choice. While it may be too much to say that man chooses his social structure, it may nonetheless be true that his social structure is a product of his choices.

Our purpose in this essay will be to illustrate the value of this viewpoint by examining a situation in which a society does offer a choice among various forms of marriage and adoption. Our case will be the village of Hsiachichou, a small Hokkien community located near the city of Taipei in Northern Taiwan. Looking at the recent genealogical history of this village as a product of decisions about marriage and adoption, we will attempt to answer the question of why the members of this community chose to order their social relations in the way they did. Why did some families choose to raise their own daughters, while others gave them away in adoption? Why did some families allow their adult daughters to marry out of the family while their neighbors chose to arrange matrilocal marriages for theirs? Why did some childless families choose to adopt sons as a means of insuring the continuity of their line, while others decided to adopt

121 a daughter in the hope of later bringing a son-in-law into the family by means of a matrilocal marriage? Our suggestion is that the answer to these questions will be a large part of the answer to the question of what the social structure of this village will be forty years from now.

In attempting to discover why the people of this one community made the decisions they did, it will be worthwhile for us to keep several more general questions in mind. One of these is the extent to which the factors which enter into these decisions are amenable to generalization. Families differ in terms of the personalities of their individual members, and also in terms of their relations with the society at large. As some anthropologists would say, every family has its own culture. It may then be that every family makes its decisions in terms of a unique combination of considerations, none of these considerations playing a prominent role in the choices of a majority of all families. If this were the case, a search for generalizations would be in vain, for such a search assumes the existence of a small number of universal influences. While the possibility of unique causation is an anathema to those who have faith in the gradual creation of a body of knowledge worthy of the title of a social science, it would seem that this is what is suggested by certain historical points of view prevalent in American anthropology.

Another question which will concern us is the extent to which these decisions are conscious and calculated. When a family is faced with a choice between two alternative forms of marriage, do they make

*121 their decisions by weighing the relative advantages and disadvantages of the two arrangements, or do they simply act in blind response to cultural cues or internal promptings? Although they disagree about almost every other matter, the culturologist and the learning theorist share a view of man as a creature of his environment, while many other social scientists, and particularly the economists, assume that man has the ability to analyze his surroundings and act in terms of his own best interests. Without even hoping to do more than raise the question, we will ask which of these two views is more useful for an understanding of the alternatives in social structure.

Assuming for the moment that the view of man as a rational creature is the most appropriate for our realm of study, we might ask still another question of these decisions. Are the different social arrangements which the alternatives will create taken into account in deciding between them? If it is the case that one form of marriage typically creates a tense mother-in-law daughter-in-law relationship, is this fact seen as one of the disadvantages of this form of marriage, making it a less likely choice when other things are equal? The attempt of many social anthropologists to explain social behavior seems to be premised on the assumption that the members of a society do not ordinarily have any realistic appreciation of their own social arrangements. What the native of the society says about his kinship system is often interpreted as being worth nothing more than his explanations of the physical world. But is it not possible that the members of the society are at least as acute as analysts of their own social system

121 as a foreign anthropologist? And is it not also possible that their decisions about marriage and adoption are based upon an understanding of their social consequences? If this is the case, a second and equally interesting question might be asked. When a family does take into account the social consequences of a choice between alternative forms of marriage or adoption, are they primarily concerned with the resulting domestic relations or with the nature of the interfamilial ties? Although it is unlikely that any of the protagonists would agree with the way in which we have put the matter, it would seem to us that we have here the crux of the debate about the works of Claude Levi-Strauss.

One further question which will interest us here is the extent to which it is necessary to make use of psychological concepts and propositions in attempting to account for these decisions. One finds in the writings of many social anthropologists the dictum that one can account for much if not all social behavior without reference to psychology. "Kinship behavior and not kinship sentiment is the study of the anthropologists," says Firth, to which Meyer Fortes adds, "thus explicitly rejecting a psychological starting-point."[12] Even more explicit is Middleton and Winter's view of witchcraft beliefs: "These beliefs are social, not psychological, phenomena and must be so analyzed."[13]

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[12] Meyer Fortes, "Malinowski and the Study of Kinship," in Raymond Firth (ed.), Man and Culture: An Evaluation of the Work of Bronislaw Malinowski, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited, 1957), p. 163.

[13] John Middleton and E. H. Winter, "Introduction," in John Middleton and E. H. Winter (eds.), Witchcraft in East Africa, (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1963).

*121 While we cannot agree with their curious assumption that the term "psychological" labels a form of behavior rather than an interpretation of behavior, it is nonetheless interesting to see how far one can go towards an interpretation of decisions about marriage and adoption without reference to psychology. Are the concepts developed in structural studies entirely adequate to account for such decisions, or must one also refer to the needs of the individual as an organism and the dispositions formed by the experiences of a lifetime?

Our strategy in attempting to answer these and other questions which we will raise along the way will be to compare the decisions made by families of varying types. Do those families who choose to adopt a girl and raise her as a wife for their son differ in any way from those who decide to marry their son in the preferred way? Are there any consistent differences between those families who marry their daughters matrilocally and those who do not? Do those girls who are raised by their natal families possess any characteristics which distinguish them from girls given in adoption? Unfortunately, we do not always know as much about these decisions as we would like to know. Many of them were made as long as seventy years ago, and the persons responsible were either dead or unavailable at the time of our study. [128] Although it would be ideal to have detailed information about the [126] situation of the family at the time each decision was made, we will ordinarily have to depend upon after the fact statements and such information as is contained in genealogies collected in 1960.

12 The population of the genealogies used in the study consists of a total of 843 persons. Some of these people were born in the village of Hsiachichou and died there; others lived in the village only before or after their marriage; still others were born in the village but given away in adoption within a year or two of birth. The entire population with which we will be concerned does, however, have at least two traits in common. At one time or another in their lives all were members of a family living in Hsiachichou, and if they were not living there themselves in 1960 they did have at least one primary relative living in the village at the time, a father or mother, a son or daughter, a brother or sister, or a husband or wife. Although our genealogies refer to a number of people who have moved away from the village or who have died so long ago as to have no surviving primary relative, we have excluded these cases from our analysis, assuming that such information as we have about them is untrustworthy. For various reasons we were unable to obtain the precise date of birth of a number of people included in our genealogies. Nonetheless, we are able to estimate within a year or two the birthdates of the great majority of our population, since we usually know the ages of their children and their spouse. According to these estimates, 20 of these 843 people were born in the years 1871-1880, 22 in 1881-1890, 56 in 1891-1900, 79 in 1901-1910, 80 in 1911-1920, 134 in 1921-1930, 133 in 1931-1940, 104 in 1941-1950, and 215 in the decade 1951-1960. [101] The time period with which we will be concerned is therefore the ninety year period between 1870 and 1960, although it must be noted that by and

12 large the only decisions we will consider which took place before 1900
[[101] will be those concerning adoption. Only a very small percentage of our
total population reached marriageable age before the turn of the century.

[621] With the exception of the 20 members of 5 families who came to Taiwan from the mainland of China since World War II, the population of our genealogies includes all of the residents of Hsiachichou in 1960, a total of 72 families with a combined membership of 562 people. It is important to remember, however, that our genealogies do not include all of those people who lived in Hsiachichou during the period 1870-1960. In many cases families who once lived in the village have moved away, and in these cases we do not have the information necessary to include them in our records. Moreover, our information concerning those people we have included is not equally detailed. In some cases we may know a woman's age and sibling order, the form of her marriage, her father's sibling order, and so forth, while in another all we may know is that she was born in Hsiachichou and that she was given away in adoption as a child. The reader should therefore not be surprised to find that the samples which we use to test various hypotheses vary considerably in size. If all we need to know is whether or not a woman was given away in adoption, we can use a much larger sample than if her sibling order is important to the particular test, and if we also need to know her father's sibling order still further cases must be eliminated for lack of necessary information. Finally, the reader should be warned at the outset that the information in our genealogies is not entirely free of error. Since our records were

12 checked with various members of the village and then rechecked by a Chinese scholar who grew up in the community, we are confident that they are reasonably valid, but nonetheless some errors undoubtedly remain. The genealogical affairs of Hsiachichou are extraordinarily complex, so complex in fact that one of our informants suggested that we provide the village with a copy of our genealogies in order to help the natives of the place keep track of their own histories. When faced with conflicting reports from members of their own families, several village women admitted that they weren't really certain as to how many girls they had given in adoption. As one informant explained, "There were so many of them, and it was a long time ago. I know I I gave away the first three, and I may have given away the fourth, but then again she may be the one who died."

CHAPTER 2

THE SETTING

101 The village of Hsiachichou is a small Hokkien community located
near the market town of Hsulin on the southwestern edge of the Taipei
101 basin. Seventy years ago when the Keelung and Tamsui Rivers were the
133 only convenient avenues of transportation within the basin, Hsiachichou
178 487 was commonly described as being situated on the west bank of the Tamsui
River two hours upstream from the city of Taipei. The village's location on the river was then one of its most important characteristics,
a fact still reflected in the name Hsiachichou, "The Place Down on the
178 River." After 1923, however, the river began to lose its central place
487 in the life of the village, this being the year in which the Formosan
496 Development Company completed a rail line through the southern half
[829] of the Taipei basin. At first many of the villagers refused to make
use of the railroad, apparently afraid of becoming contaminated by coal
dug in inauspicious locations, but the advantages of convenient transportation overcame their qualms. Where it had formerly taken hours of
hard poling to make a round trip to Taipei, the railroad made it possible to travel to the city and back in little more than an hour and in
relative comfort. The village of Hsiachichou is today thought of as
being "fifteen minutes from the Hsulin Station" or "three stops down
823 track from Taipei." So completely has the river lost its central place
775 in the life of the village that it is only in the seventh lunar month

775 that one hears it mentioned in conversations in the village. At this
823 time each year the hordes of "ghosts" imprisoned in the underworld are
released for a month's holiday, and as a result parents feel it nec-
essary to warn their children to stay away from the river. Their fear
is that some hate-filled soul whose life was lost by drowning might
attempt to obtain his own release from the underworld by seizing and
drowning a child as a substitute.

175 Under the Japanese military administration which governed Taiwan
from 1895 until 1903 the village of Hsiachichou was assigned to an
administrative district with its headquarters in the town of Sanhsia.
Later, after the military had been replaced by a civil administration
Hsiachichou found itself a part of the Hsulin District with its district
offices in the town of Hsulin. Forty years after this the return
of a Chinese government brought about still another change in rural
administration, and the village was designated a part of Panchiao
Hsien with its administrative headquarters in the town of Panchiao.
175 Partly because of this history, and partly because of a traditionally
634 unresponsive attitude toward all forms of government, the political
[829] status of Hsiachichou has never been a significant aspect of the lives
of village inhabitants. Instead, their orientation towards the
outside world has always been in terms of the village's status as one
of the five "areas" (lún) which make up the locally recognized district
of Chichou. Although it has never been granted official status under
any of the governments which have ruled Taiwan, the boundaries of Chichou
are the boundaries which mark the line between the villagers' immediate

175 private world and the larger impersonal world of society at large. [p34] When a resident of Hsiachichou says that he is going "outside," he means that he is going beyond the limits of Chichou. In order to understand why this is so, and what it means for a person to think of himself as a resident of Chichou, we must know something of the history of this community.

According to the best information now available, the district of Chichou was originally settled in the mid-1770's by two brothers surnamed Ong. Leaving their native Fukien village in the Tungan District of Chuanchou, they migrated first to the area of Hsinchu in north central Taiwan, and then within several years moved again to settle on the banks of the Tamsui River. What life was like for these men and their early descendants is now difficult to discover, for the genealogical records which they left contain no more than the simple facts of marriage, birth, and death. Of one thing, however, we can be certain. The lives and the property of these early settlers were in constant danger. Unlike the native peoples of many parts of the world, the dispossessed aborigines of the area reacted to the incursions of their more powerful neighbors with a fierce resistance, and until as late as the 1920's forced many communities on the island to take protective measures. Further dangers for the early inhabitants of Chichou were the result of the constant internecine warfare among the various groups of Chinese settlers. The history of the Chinese settlement of the Taipei basin might well be written in terms of the conflicts between Chinese of various mainland origins. The formation of the city of Taipei, for

175 example, was the outcome of years of bloody fighting between settlers from Chuanchou and Changchou, the prize in this case being domination of the port facilities and trade with the mainland. To what extent the early residents of Chichou became involved in these struggles we cannot now say, but that they did become involved is almost certain. Again and again fighting which began in Taipei flared into major armed conflicts which rapidly spread over the countryside, often disturbing the peace of cities as far away as the southern end of the island. It is perhaps significant to note that it was not until the early 1920's that the first Changchou woman married into Hsiachichou and that even today she is stigmatized with the name Chang-ah. And finally, aside from the threat posed by the aborigines and the danger of war with other Chinese, the early settlers of Chichou were plagued with bandits. [578] As late as 1870 the bandits of the Hsulin area were so powerful as to be able to resist all official interference. According to the missionary George MacKay, the subprefect and his retinue narrowly escaped death in this area in 1873, and at that time it was apparently not uncommon for the bandits of the area "to form a company and march into the town, singing boastfully, with a wild kind of yell ... 'You trust the mandarins; we trust the mountains.'"[1]

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613 Considering these various external threats, it is not surprising that for a long time the early inhabitants of Chichou united to form a single corporate lineage, a fact we can infer from the existence of a

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[1] George L. MacKay, From Far Formosa, (New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1895), p. 160.

175 genealogy which records the names of their male children. Common member-
613 ship in a corporate lineage probably served to remind the various
families of the area of their common ancestry and joint responsibility,
and lineage land holdings must have helped to insure the success of
their cooperative efforts by providing the necessary element of self-
interest. As the population of Chichou increased, however, this organ-
ization was weakened. What must have begun as small independent home-
steads grew into villages; these quarreled with one another over the
management of the lineage's joint land holdings; and as a result the
original lineage fragmented into several independent organizations.
At the same time a few families of other surnames began settling in
175 Chichou. As early as the end of the 18th century a Tan family settled
621 in the area of the district that is now Hsiachichou, and during the
613
634 course of the 19th century families from the Ng and Lim villages on
either side of Chichou established branches within its boundaries.
These early incursions have been followed in the present century by
an ever increasing influx of what the Ong families still refer to as
"outsiders." The result of these two processes is that today the
district of Chichou consists of five independent Ong lineages each of
which occupies a community in which a third of their neighbors are
families of another surname. The unity of Chichou is maintained by
the Ong families' recognition of their common origin and former
interdependence; the independence and individual identity of each of the
five *lún* is achieved as a result of the fact that each is built around
a core of closely related Ong families who comprise an independent lineage.

776 The outlines of this structure are clearly reflected in the religious
778 life of the district of Chichou. Like independent communities
634 all over China, each of the five lún has a small temple devoted to the
621 god of the land, Tu Ti Kung. A god of little rank in the supernatural
hierarchy, the Tu Ti Kung of each village is essentially a village
recorder. He records births and deaths, marriages, and such changes
in the village as the opening of new fields, the construction of a
new home, or the arrival of a new family. Generally speaking, the
Tu Ti Kung has as his province the immediate material welfare of the
particular community in which his temple is located. Of much higher
rank than Tu Ti Kung is the god Shang Ti Kung. Lodged in a large temple
located in approximately the geographical center of Chichou, this god's
794 authority is recognized as extending over the entire district. The
796 management of his temple is appropriately in the hands of a district-
634 wide committee which arranges for the upkeep of the temple and organizes
the annual celebration in honor of the god's birthday. Each year this
committee chooses by lot from one of the five lún a dozen or so men
who have the task of carrying the god's chair in his annual "tour of
inspection." Preceded by banners and incense burners, and followed
by several bands and throngs of subjects, the god traverses the four
corners of Chichou, his trip symbolizing the extent and area of his
776 authority. Whereas the Tu Ti King is a minor official charged with the
634 responsibility of keeping village records, the Shang Ti Kung is
comparable to a magistrate responsible for the administration of an
entire district. The five Tu Ti Kung thus represent the independence

776 of the five lún, while the Shang Ti Kung stands for the unity of all of
634 Chichou.

36 The fifteen minute walk from the train station in Hsulin to the
44 village of Hsiachichou takes one through the main business street of
438 the market town. Here under the arcades which edge the street are a
463 variety of small stores and shops which cater to the material and spiritual
759 needs of the surrounding villages. There is a small shop selling ice
294 and a variety of cold drinks, a western style drug store advertising
486 everything from aspirin to penicillin, next door to this a traditional
548 Chinese drug store famous for its cures for consumption, the tiny office
262 of a local doctor trained in Japan, a dry goods store specializing in
524 ready made western clothing, a tailor who scorns western clothing,
215 a coffin shop sweet with the cool smell of camphor, a small two story
218 hotel which also functions as a brothel, several food stores pungent
787 with the odors of garlic and salted cabbage, a photography shop dis-
734 playing pictures of Japanese and American movie stars, a pool hall
778 where young village men come to play billiards at night, a variety
794 store selling mostly children's copybooks and writing materials, a
dusty mill full of sacks of grain, two family shops making noodles
for local restaurants, a fortune teller's stall run by a man disabled
in the Second World War, a three or four room hospital which serves as
a prison for the violently insane, and at the end of the street a Tu
Ti Kung Temple supported by the local businessmen and their families.
To know this street is to know a great deal about the life of the
local population.

36 Beyond the Tu Ti Kung temple at the end of the arcade, the path to Hsichichou turns sharply to the right, narrows into a crooked little alley, and then suddenly opens out to the lush green countryside. From here one can see most of the district of Chichou. In the immediate foreground is a cluster of red brick houses which make up the village of Shalun; behind these are the green tile roofs of the Japanese built elementary school and police station; to the right is another cluster of poorer homes belonging to the village of Fantzupu; and in the distant foreground under a great tree is a small Tu Ti Kung temple behind which one can make out the roofs of Hsiachicou among the thickly leaved trees. After the cluttered dirty streets of the town, the scene is one
361
342 of remarkable beauty. The carefully patterned paddy fields create a framework of order and coherence; the graceful concave roofs of the red brick farm houses bring life to the mass of green; and in the background the massive prominence of the central mountain range gives the whole vista a sense of dignity and proportion.

342 As an introduction to life in Hsiachichou no aspect of the village is more revealing than the village houses. Embodied in the design of the houses and the living arrangements of their inhabitants are the essential dimensions of village life. As the variety of building materials reveals, the typical village house is an aggregate of structures dating from various periods. In most cases the original structure is a long rectangular building partitioned into five parallel rooms. Almost without exception, the central room is the largest room in the house, and is entered by way of heavy double-leafed doors which face

342 either to the south or to the west. This is what the villagers refer
353 to as the *kōng-thiâ*:, or "court," and it is here, on a high altar
778
342 facing the door, that one finds the family's ancestral tablets. In a
new house the *kōng-thiâ*: is invariably the cleanest, best cared for, and
most expensively furnished room in the house. If the family owns a
radio or a phonograph it will be found on a table in the *kōng-thiâ*:,
or if they happen to possess a piece of calligraphy by some notable
this will be found hanging in the *kōng-thiâ*:. Even the use of building
materials will usually reflect the central and public character of the
333 *kōng-thiâ*:. In many of those village houses in which the floors of
778 the kitchen and bedrooms are tamped dirt, the floor of the *kōng-thiâ*:
342 is concrete, while in one of the few houses in which even the bedrooms
and kitchen have concrete floors, the floor of the *kōng-thiâ*: is terrazzo.

778 As in so many other areas of life, the people of Hsiachichou think
554 of a house in terms of relative social status. The principles are very
simple. What is to the left of the ancestral tablets is of higher
status than what is to the right of the tablets, and what is near the
778 tablets is of higher status than what is distant from the tablets. The
554 guest of honor sits at the end of the table closest to the tablets
574 facing the door of the *kōng-thiâ*:, while the host sits at the end of
the table most distant from the tablets facing the altar and the tablets.
The second most distinguished guest sits to the immediate left of the
guest of honor, or, as the villagers would see it, he takes the position on the left side which is closest to the family altar; while the
third ranking guest is placed in the seat to the immediate right of the

778 guest of honor, a position which is lower than the place to the left of
584 the guest of honor because it is on the right hand side of the table,
574 but higher than the second seat on the left side of the table because it
is closer to the altar. The same principles are applied to the assign-
778 ment of the family sleeping quarters. As the person of highest status
513 in the family, the head of the household takes as his bedroom the room
*592 to the immediate left of the *kōng*-*thiâ*:, while his younger brother or
married son will occupy the room to the right of the *kōng*-*thiâ*:. If
the head of the household has both a younger brother and married sons,
the younger brother will occupy the room to the right of the *kōng*-*thiâ*:,
the sons taking as their quarters a room at the end of the house or even
a room in a wing of the house. The living arrangements of the various
members of a household thus serve as a constant and not very subtle
reminder of their relative status in the family hierarchy.

The *kōng*-*thiâ*: is what one might call the public area of the house.
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778 It is the portal through which the family carries on its relationships
*592 with the world outside of the house. When guests come they enter through
[374 the *kōng*-*thiâ*:, and they leave by way of the *kōng*-*thiâ*:. It is also
586 by way of the *kōng*-*thiâ*: that a bride first enters her husband's family,
764] and it is through the *kōng*-*thiâ*: that a deceased member of the family
passes out of the family circle. The other side of a family's life, its
private or domestic side as contrasted with its public side, is centered
*592 not in the *kōng*-*thiâ*:, but rather in the family kitchen. Typically
354 located in one of the two end rooms of the house, the kitchen invar-
iably contains a large red brick cooking stove, the symbol of the domestic

592 354 family. As long as they constitute a single kê, or "family," a man
and his brothers and sons will always use the same stove, but as soon
as the kê is divided new stoves must be constructed. The division of
a single kê into several new units is, in fact, most commonly referred
to in Hsiachichou as "the separation of the stove." The stove is both
the symbol and the locus of the kê, and it is inconceivable that two
families should use the same stove. So strong is this identity of
stove and family that great care must be taken lest the family suffer
as a result of the character of the stove. The location of the stove,
the timing of its construction, and its general condition are all thought
[787] of as being intimately related to the fate of the kê. When one
village family learned from a shaman that "there were ants and other
things in their stove," they demolished the structure and threw the
bricks into the river. One of their neighbors explained, "There was
nothing else they could do. A family will never have peace if it does
not have a good stove."

Although the new village house is usually built with fairly spacious
341 342 596 dimensions, no village family would be satisfied to see their home remain a simple rectangular structure. Their hope is always that their
sons and grandsons will marry and remain a part of the parental household, and that as a result the house will be expanded to meet the needs
of an expanded family. An explicit manifestation of this hope is to
be seen in the design of the new house. In addition to the large
entrance which leads into the kōng-thiâ:, the front wall of the house
will always include two smaller doors, one at each end of the house.

341 342 596 But when the building is new these doors are not used as entrances to the house; in fact, they are usually closed with brick or mud, whatever the original building material. They are only included in the design of the house because of the hope that eventually the house will be expanded with the addition of one or two wings of rooms. The vision which inspires Chinese domestic architecture is that of a large U shaped building housing many sons and grandsons and their wives and children.

A few of the older village houses stand in much the same condition today as they did the day they were completed. These houses are the homes of families whose fortunes have given them few male descendants and those of families whose sons and grandsons have had to leave the village in order to make a living. In the case of most of the older village homes, however, at least one and in some cases two wings have been added to the original building to create a large L or U shaped structure. Of 15 village houses of twenty years of age or more, 6 had at least one additional wing, 5 had reached the state of being balanced U shaped structures, and only 4 remained in their original rectangular shape. But while a builder's vision of the future of his house is thus often realized, these expanded homes seldom house the harmonious extended family which inspired their construction. For reasons which we will discuss in detail later, brothers will ordinarily divide their parental family within a few years after the younger brother's marriage, the result being that by the time the house reaches its full size the family has long since been split into a number of

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*592 independent units. Rather than a great extended family living under
596 one authority and one roof, what one typically finds in a large compound
[778] is a number of related but independent households. They will usually
[361] share the use of the kōng-thiâ:, the yard between the two wings of the
[342] house, the well if there is one, and the toilet, but each family will
[614] have its own bedroom and its own stove, even if this requires the
[354] building of two stoves in one kitchen.

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The stages in the evolution of a house from a small one-family
778 structure to a large complex compound are clearly marked in the use and
356 care of the kōng-thiâ:. When a house is new and inhabited by a single
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596 kê, the kōng-thiâ: will be always the best kept room in the building.
[353] The interior walls will be freshly white-washed; the floors will have
been swept daily; and the furniture will be as expensive as the family
can possibly afford. After the sons of the original family divide
their parental kê, the kōng-thiâ: and its furniture will begin to deteriorate,
for their wives will be unwilling to devote their time or money
to what they regard as "public property." So long as their mother is
still alive, however, the room will never be in marked disrepair. What
work she cannot do herself, she will badger her daughters-in-law into
doing. The real decline of the kōng-thiâ: begins when she and her
husband die. There is then no one among the residents of the house who
has a responsibility towards the settlement as a whole, and as a
result no one is willing to give up the time or money to the upkeep
[539] of the kōng-thiâ:. As one of the most accurate of Chinese proverbs
states, "What is public is for everyone's use and is no one's responsibility."
000 The inevitable result is that the kōng-thiâ: and its

*592 178 356 furnishings decline and fall apart, their deterioration reflecting the decline and fall of the original family.

596 In the third or fourth generation after its construction, the typical village house is abandoned for better quarters. By that time the roof and even the walls will have begun to deteriorate rapidly, and it is usually simpler for the residents to separate and build new homes than it is for them to make a joint effort to repair the older building. We can thus trace in the history of the village a cycle of rise and decline which is closely related to the cycle of the typical village family. Beginning as a small rectangular building housing a single *kê*, the house grows with the growth of the family into a large compound, and then gradually deteriorates with the division of the family into independent units each of which eventually leaves to build
[621] a new house. This process repeated again and again is the history of the formation of Hsiachichou, and is clearly evident in a correlation
*592 of degree of kinship with proximity of residence. If a number of
621 persons live in the same house and share the same stove they are almost
602 certainly related in the first or second degree; if they live in the same house but do not share the same stove they are most likely related in the second or third degree; living in adjacent houses they are more likely to be related than unrelated but often only distantly; while if they live in different sections of the village they are likely to be unrelated or only very distantly related.

178 Despite the far reaching changes which have taken place in Taiwan in the past fifty years, life in the village of Hsiachichou has in

178 many respects remained surprisingly unchanged. Brides today wear white
[585] western style wedding dresses, but otherwise the ritual of the nuptial
ceremonies is much the same as it was at the turn of the century. The
[769] head of one household destroyed his ancestral tablets several years ago
in a fit of anger, the ancestors having "let his mother and his wife
die," but with this one exception every family in the village continues
[756] to make regular sacrifices to the deceased. Western medicine and
relatively modern medical facilities are readily available, and yet two
men are able to make a living in the Hsulin area as shamans. Many
[302] [796] of the young village men wear their hair long in imitation of the
Japanese imitation of Elvis Presley, but they are still willing to serve
as bearers every year when the god Shang Ti Kung is carried in a heavy
sedan chair across a bed of hot coals. Nor are these simply empty obser-
vances carried on out of the inertia of the young and nostalgia of the
[771] old. Particularly in respect to religion, the traditional life of
[794] the village displays real vitality. As late as 1925 a group of
[796] villagers established a new committee to organize worship for the god
[778] Tai Tzu Yeh, and in the year immediately before the war the people of
Chichou contributed both time and money to rebuild the Shang Ti Kung
temple. Even as late as 1960 it was possible for the committee in
charge of the temple to collect several thousand dollars to hire two
Taoist nuns to care for the building.

In one very important respect, however, there has been a real and irreversible change in the life of Hsiachichou, a change which has begun to have a substantial effect upon marriage forms and family life.

178 In 1895 when the island was ceded to Japan the village of Hsiachichou
433 was almost exclusively an agricultural community. Of the thirty or
463 forty families living in the village at that time there were apparently
only five who did not derive all of their income from agriculture, these
being the village storekeeper, a highly successful shaman whose services
were in demand for miles around, and three families who made their livings
464 as boatmen on the Tamsui. If a villager of that day did not want
178 to work as a farmer, or if he did not inherit enough farm land to make
his living this way, there was no choice for him but to leave the
community to find a livelihood elsewhere. There was no industry in the
area which could give him employment, and Taipei was too far away for
a person to live in Hsiachichou and work in the city.

In the course of the next thirty to forty years changes took place
178 464 which drastically altered this situation, the precipitating factor
496 being the construction of the Taipei-Hsinchu railroad in 1923. The
433 railroad itself created a number of jobs for coolies and clerks in the
Hsulin station, and made it possible for a few men to live in the
village and work in Taipei. More important in terms of its eventual
effect upon village life, the construction of the railroad stimulated
the development of local industry in Hsulin, Panchiao, and other
178 neighboring market towns. In the 1920's and 1930's Japanese development
433 companies opened large scale coal mines in the foothills to the
[316] west and east of Hsulin; in the early 1920's a winery was built in
[274] [256] Hsulin which by 1930 had grown to be the largest winery on the island;
the winery stimulated development of several smaller industries

178 433 including a bottle works and a packing plant; and at about the same
[274] time a flour mill was built in nearby Shantzuchiao. More recently,
[316] a drug factory employing nearly a hundred people was built in Hsulin,
[256] and since the war a textile industry has developed in the market town
[278] of Panchiao. Although there are still not enough positions for all
[288] [464] those seeking employment, these developments have at least created for
some village men the possibility for something other than an agricultural
income.

At about the same time as these new resources were developing, the
need for something other than an income from agriculture was becoming
178 pressing in Hsiachichou. Within thirty years of their occupation of
[177] Taiwan, the Japanese colonial government introduced a broad and highly
[648] effective medical program with the inevitable result that the infant
[744] mortality rate over the succeeding twenty years fell dramatically.
[165] Thus while new opportunities for employment were being created the
[161] [464] future work force was increasing at a rapid rate. Even then, however,
these developments would not have had a substantial effect upon the
178 village had it not been for one further change. To work in the drug
464 871 factories or the textile mill at least a minimum of education is required, and without such education the villagers might never have been
able to compete with more urban dwellers for employment opportunities.
[212] Fortunately an elementary school was established in Chichou in the first
decade of this century, so that by the time the shift in economy took
place the majority of the male villagers were at least literate.

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[433]
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The result of these three concomitant changes has been that Hsiachichou has more and more turned away from agriculture as the basis of its economy. By 1960 when most of the data for the present study were collected only 27 of the 72 families then living in the village obtained a substantial portion of their income from agriculture, and of these 27 families only 4 were entirely dependent upon farming or animal husbandry for their livelihood. The occupations of the villagers were by then so diverse as to make a simple descriptive classification impossible. Those 23 families supplementing a farm income with some other source of income included two families who owned a small dry goods store in Taipei; one family in which the head of the household worked part time as a cook while his son-in-law was employed as a coal miner; a family in which the head of the household was employed as a car inspector for the railroad and his daughter as a bank cashier; one family in which the wife did most of the farming so that her husband could hold a job as janitor in a middle school; three families in which the head of the household farmed while his sons worked as coal miners or in the Hsulin winery; one case in which an elderly farmer was supported primarily by the earnings of a daughter who worked as a prostitute; one family whose head worked in the mornings as a butcher and farmed in the afternoon; and one in which the head of the family managed a small factory while his older brother's son farmed the family's land. In the case of those 46 families who depended entirely upon something other than agriculture the occupations followed were even more diverse. They included a family whose sole income was gambling receipts; three families

178 in which the head of the household earned a meager living as a cart
463 puller; two families who were supported by one or more sons employed as
621 pedicab drivers; two families who owned and operated fish stalls in the Hsulin market; one family in which the husband and wife earned a living by peddling rice cakes; two families whose income consisted primarily of the earnings of teenage boys who worked shining shoes in the Taipei station; one family the head of which was employed making tatami for the railroad while his sons worked as carpenters; one family supported primarily by the earnings of a goldsmith; three families in which all of the adult males were employed as coal miners; one family in which a father and his three sons made a living manufacturing noodles; and at least five cases in which the family was almost entirely dependent upon the earnings of daughters working as prostitutes.

*121 We will thus be looking at the village of Hsiachichou during a
178 period of considerable change in its economy. What was a traditional
433 Chinese agricultural community at the beginning of the period with which we will be concerned, was primarily a wage earning community by 1960. As we shall see later, these developments in the economy have had substantial effects upon the traditional institutions, but by 1960 at least they had not yet destroyed these institutions. The changes which had taken place by then were more a matter of degree than a matter of kind. It is by degrees that institutions die, however, and not too many years will have passed before the institutional structure itself will
*121 have given way. By 1960 even the long cherished ideal of the extended
178 family was beginning to show signs of weakening. Of the six houses
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Of the six houses
* 121 constructed in the village during the past five years four were simply
178 box like structures built side by side to save the expense of a wall.
596 Since such construction precluded the possibility of later expansion,
342 the builders of these houses had evidently given up the vision of a
"great house of many generations and many branches."

2:Wolf E-5 (1958-1961) 1964 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Hsiachichou

CHAPTER 3

THE PREFERRED MARRIAGE

*121 The institutions of the village of Hsiachichou are similar to those
*597 of China in general in that they allow a variety of means of marriage
58 and adoption. A family with a son may adopt a female child and raise
129 her as his wife, or they may wait until he is an adult and then look for a wife. A family with a daughter may give her away in adoption as a child, or they may raise her as a member of the family and later choose between a patrilocal or matrilocal marriage. The institutions of the community give scope for the formation of a great variety of genealogical patterns. Our task here will be to trace the genealogical history of Hsiachichou during the course of the past sixty years in an attempt to determine what some of the factors were which went into the formation of this particular pattern. Given the existence of institutions which encourage certain social arrangements and discourage others, and recognizing that the range of choice is partially determined by vagaries of human genetics, we will attempt to discover why the people of Hsiachichou chose to arrange their social world in the way they did.

Our first step in this direction willbe to describe the institutions of marriage and adoption as they existed in Hsiachichou during the period 1870-1960. The genealogical decisions made by individual families arose as choices between alternative forms of marriage and adoption, and we will need to understand the nature of these institutions

*121 in order to understand why village families acted in the way they did. *597 What are the various forms of marriage? How are they arranged? By 128 58 whom are they arranged? What obligations and expectations do they create? What rituals are associated with each form of marriage? What is the meaning of these rituals? The answers to these questions naturally depend in part upon whether we are talking about 1870 or [178] 1960. The bride of 1870 traveled to her husband's home in a sedan chair carried by several strong men; the bride of 1960 made the trip in a hired car at the head of a caravan of taxis. There have also been some adjustments in the rituals of marriage and adoption, but by and large the rules which governed these social transfers were still recognized and accepted in Hsiachichou in 1960. We will therefore describe these institutions as though we were dealing with a single point in time rather than with a period of ninety years.

*583 Although we are not prepared here to argue why it should be so, 183 it is clear that what we have called the preferred patrilocal marriage 591 582 is the more socially desirable form of marriage in Hsiachichou. It is the preferred form in the sense that it is the form of marriage which everyone would choose if form were the only consideration. When the villagers speak of marriage in general, they always mean the preferred patrilocal form of marriage, and the assumption that it is the form of marriage is clearly not new. The ritual procedures for enacting the preferred form of marriage are much more elaborate than for any of the other forms of marriage, and the villagers themselves regard the ritual associated with these other forms of marriage as having been modeled

*583 upon the preferred form of marriage. It is therefore both convenient
183 and appropriate for us to begin our description of marriage practices
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582 in Hsiachichou with the preferred patrilocal marriage.

582 Theoretically at least, a preferred marriage may involve any
178 man and woman previously unmarried who are not of the same surname,
[183] marriage between people of the same surname being considered incestuous. In fact, however, the selection of a bride in Hsiachichou has always been guided by otherequally important though somewhat less formal considerations. At the beginning of the period with which we will be concerned marriage between persons of different mainland origins was unthinkable even when both parties were speakers of Hokkien. Frequent armed conflicts between the Changchou and Chuanchou sectors of the society created a strong sense of antagonism and mutual suspicion, and as a result ethnic lines were sharply drawn and seldom violated. As we have mentioned in discussing the general character of the village, it was not until the early 1920's that the first Changchou woman married into Hsiachichou, a Chuanchou village. More recently, this particular distinction has lost some of its former significance. One elderly villager told us that "Changchou people still tell their children to marry a person from Changchou, and Chuanchou people still tell their sons to marry a Chuanchou girl," but despite such attitudes marriages between the two groups have been less uncommon during the last twenty
178 years. Although one can still identify families of different origins
186 by the gods they worship and the way in which they sacrifice to their ancestors, many younger people are unaware of the significance of these

178 differences. When asked where their ancestors originated on the main-
186 land, several younger villagers told us that they didn't know. "That's
something you should ask the old people about."

186 But while the ethnic lines distinguishing the various Hokkien
648 groups have blurred with time; there still remains a sharp distinction
171 between the island's two major language groups, the Hokkien and the
Hakka. People can now talk in a disinterested manner about differences between Changchou and Chuanchou customs, but it is always with a certain amount of scorn that one compares the ways of the Hakka and the Hokkien. On their return from the burial site a Hokkien funeral party always stops at every stream or roadway to invite the soul of the deceased to cross the barrier. After explaining to us that this was so "the soul will always be able to find its way home," one villager then noted, "but the Hakka don't do this. They don't care whether their ancestors can find their way back or not." As a result of such prejudices, marriages between the two groups are still uncommon. Although Hsiachichou is only a few miles from an area in which the majority of the population is Hakka, our genealogies include only two marriages with a Hakka, and both of these occurred within the past five years.

186 Whatever the villagers' attitude toward marrying Hakka, it is not
582 nearly so negative as their attitude toward marrying what they speak
648 of as "mainlanders," those Chinese who have settled on Taiwan since
World War II. One reason is that many village parents fear that if they allow a daughter to marry a mainlander they may never see her

186 582 648 again. As one woman put it, "I don't want my daughter to marry a mainlander. 'If you marry a chicken you have to follow a chicken, and if you marry a dog, you have to follow a dog.' If she married a mainlander she would have to go with him, and then I might never see her again." Considering the government's insistence that a return to the mainland is imminent, this particular fear is not an irrational one, at least from the point of view of people in Hsiachichou, but the general attitude of the village towards marrying mainland Chinese probably contains more prejudice than reason. The mainlander is seen as immoral, irresponsbile, and generally lacking in human qualities, a view for which the villagers find some justification in the behavior of the local police and the military. One man told us that no matter what happened he wouldn't allow his daughter to marry a mainlander. "If they say they are going to go they go, and they don't care if their wives and children are alive or dead." When one village family did allow their daughter to marry a Cantonese policeman, their neighbors were incredulous. As the woman herself told us later, "Everyone said to me, 'Aren't you afraid that he will sell you? Aren't you afraid that he won't want you after you are married awhile? Don't you worry that he will always be beating you?'"

582 But while the people of Hsiachichou are thus prejudiced against marriage with other ethnic groups, they do not favor marriage within the same community. To contract a marriage within the village is considered dangerous "because then your daughter-in-law will always be running home to say things to her parents." The villagers recognize that

582 in such a situation tension between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law
may strain affinal ties, but their primary concern is the effect of
such a situation upon the mother-in-law daughter-in-law relationship
itself. They fear that the girl's having natural allies in the same
community will exacerbate what is at best a relationship of restrained
*583 hostility. Our genealogies include only four cases of preferred marriages
*597 582 in which the man and wife were both residents of Hsiachichou prior to
613 their marriage, and these four cases are all exceptional in that the
parties were members of families belonging to the same lineage. While
ordinarily considered incestuous, such marriages are permissable in
one situation. If a family adopts a daughter to marry to one of their
sons and for some reason this marriage does not materialize, the girl
is then eligible to marry into families belonging to the same lineage
as her foster family. As to why village families are willing to
contract endogamous marriages within their lineage but not outside it,
we can only guess, having not seen the significance of the question
while we were still in a position to collect pertinent data. Perhaps
the strength of the prior agnatic ties effectively precludes the tensions which are apt to arise when marriages are contracted between
families who are not close kinsmen and who do not belong to a common
kinship organization.

*584 Unlike the situation in many areas of China, preferred marriages in Hsiachichou seldom begin as infant betrothals. Occasionally, two women who are close friends will discuss the possibility of marrying an infant son and daughter, but such discussions are not ordinarily

584 taken very seriously. It is usually not until a daughter is at least sixteen years old and a son at least eighteen that their families will begin to think seriously about their marriage. The stimulus is often a suggestion from some friend or relative who is interested in acting as go-between. Theoretically, the preferred patrilocal marriage is always initiated by the male's family, but in fact most marriages of this kind are initiated by a go-between. Almost every woman of forty years of age or more is a potential marriage broker, and many elderly women manage to turn the role of go-between into a fairly lucrative [435] business. The fee for arranging a marriage in Hsiachichou in 1960 was approximately NT$1000, something more than a good month's salary. The result is that as soon as a family has a child of marriageable age there begins what one informant described as "old ladies coming and going all day and talking about this and talking about that."

A well known Hokkien proverb declares that marriages are made by go-betweens, and there is a great deal of truth in this. It is impossible to have a marriage in Hsiachichou without a go-between. She is the match-maker and confidante; she is the honest broker who negotiates the bride price on one side and the dowry on the other; she is the master of ceremonies at the wedding; and after the wedding she becomes the disinterested but sympathetic third party who is always available to mediate marital conflicts. Even when the match is already decided upon the services of a go-between are required to effect the union. One young village man who was himself an orphan asked a young woman whom he had met at work to marry him, and when she agreed he then hired a go-between

* 584 to arrange the marriage. Someone was needed to negotiate the bride price and dowry with the girl's family, and someone was needed simply to play the role of go-between. The traditional ritual duties of the go-between are such that it is impossible to perform the engagement and wedding without someone playing this role. Although she may be damned in folklore and proverb as deceitful and conniving, the go-between is at the very least an indispensable evil.

But while it may be impossible to effect a marriage without a go-between, not any go-between will suffice. The first step towards a [582] satisfactory marriage is the choice of the right go-between. Since marriage with the same surname group is impossible because of the incest taboo, and since it is also felt that marriage within the same community is undesirable, a marriage will almost always involve a family's establishing social relations with someone with whom they are not intimately acquainted. For this reason it is extremely important to the family that they have a go-between they can trust, for most of the information they obtain about these potential kinsmen will be through her. A family will often respond to the suggestions of a go-between as much because of the qualities of the go-between as the qualities of the suggested match. The rule is simple and is almost universally observed, having, as we shall see later, a very strong effect upon the patterning of marriage alliances: no marriage is any better than the go-between who makes the arrangements.

When at last a family chooses a go-between in whom they have confidence, they then begin intensive inquiries about the other party to the

584 match she is suggesting. The go-between is called in for consultation; relatives and friends are queried for any information they may be able to provide; and the other party's house and property are carefully surveyed for signs of prestige and prosperity. One informant told us jokingly that having a daughter reach marriageable age was like putting your house up for sale. Nor are more esoteric sources of information
584 neglected. The women of the family will always submit any marriage
787 proposal for the approval of the gods, and sometimes a family will hire a shaman in order to obtain a more reliable estimate of the advisability of a match. So sensitve are many families to the need for favorable supernatural signs that any unnatural or untoward event may result in the rejection of a particular marriage proposal. During the period we were living in Hsiachichou one woman rejected a proposed match for her daughter "because all of our chickens died suddenly and for no apparent reason. How can one expect a marriage to turn out well if the gods are not in its favor?"

Should both of the families turn out to be satisfied with their inquiries, the first public step toward the completion of the match will then be undertaken. This is the so-called "matching of the eight characters." Through the medium of the go-between the two families exchange slips of red paper on which are set out the time, day, month, and year of the bride's and of the groom's birth. These data are then submitted by each family to a fortune teller who interprets the information to determine whether or not the two parties to the marriage are compatible. Although a fortune teller will occasionally give a negative

*584 answer to such an inquiry, a marriage will seldom founder at this
787 point. If one fortune taller gives an unfavorable response, a family will sacrifice to a god or to their ancestors, and then consult a second fortune teller; and the rules of the fortune teller's art are not so carefully defined as to preclude a favorable response. When a family is still undecided about the advisability of any particular match, magical considerations may deter them, but once they have decided that a match is good they are not likely to be dissuaded by supernatural indications. The "matching of the eight characters" is perhaps best understood as a public determination of what both families have already discovered to be the case in private.

*584 After the exchange of the "eight characters" the marriage negotia-
*583 tions enter their most difficult stage. The arrangement of the preferred patrilocal marriage in Hsiachichou involves the exchange of a variety of gifts. Some time prior to the engagement the groom's family must send to the future bride several pieces of gold jewelry, and at the time of the engagement they must provide her family with cakes to distribute to friends and relatives as a means of announcing the marriage. More importantly, the groom's family is required by custom to pay a bride price "to thank the girl's family for raising her," and the bride's family must respond by preparing a dowry to accompany their daughter to her new home. The negotiation of the values of these various gifts requires all the skills of the most gifted go-between, and it is one these shoals that the careers of the less adept founder and end in disaster. The typical villager sees both his fortune and

*583 his face at stake in these negotiations. On the one hand, he is inter-
*584 ested in giving little and receiving much, while, on the other, he is
concerned to preserve if not enhance his standing in the eyes of his
*583 friends and neighbors. It is a generally accepted principle in these
*584 negotiations that your face is at stake when you are "coming" and that
554 my face is at stake when I am "going", which is to say that we can both
558 gain face by giving generously. But, on the other hand, there is a
counter principle which says that an inappropriately small gift is an insult, and since the object of any insult loses face, we must both be as concerned about what we receive as about what we give. If I give a bride price which is less than a person of your social standing might expect from a person of my social standing, this is an insult and causes you to lose face; while if you send your daughter with a dowry which is less than I have a right to expect given our relative status, this is an insult to me and may cause me to lose face. The dowry and bride price must therefore be of approximately the same size; the values of the two must be something we can both afford and are both willing to pay; and yet we must both be able to satisfy whatever desire we may have of enhancing our social standing with a display of generosity. Considering that the value of a bride price and dowry are not easily equated, and also that any two families will almost never agree as to the relative importance of prestige and economy, one can easily understand why these negotiations often last for months and try the patience of the most hardened go-between.

*584
*583 And yet the bride price and the dowry must be settled in detail before the arrangements for the marriage can proceed any further. In one case we witnessed, an inexperienced go-between failed to complete these negotiations, and as a result the marriage very nearly miscarried. When the bride's family inquired about the bride price, the go-between answered, "That is no problem. They own two stores and are rich, and so they will naturally want to be generous." But while the groom's family did send a large number of cakes and a plentiful supply of fish and meat for the engagement party, they sent a bride price which was considerably less than the usual amount. The bride and her family were furious. "In this village the bride price is at least NT$6000. I never heard anyone say NT$2000." The bride told us that when she opened the envelope and saw that the bride price was so small she "almost had to sit down" because she "was so surprised and so angry." To make their irritation more than apparent the bride's parents put the meat and fish in an ice house in Hsulin, and the next day returned them to the groom's home in Taipei. To return at least a portion of this gift of food is in accordance with local etiquette, and so the groom's family naturally responded by returning the food to Hsiachichou. This gesture the bride's family thoroughly rejected by sending the than spoiled meat and fish back to the groom's family for the second time. Finally, mutual relatives intervened and a settlement was negotiated, but the incident left deep wounds and much ill will. Chinese families may indeed undertake marriages as a means of establishing useful and prestigeful alliances, just as many anthropologists suppose, but the

*583 *584 result of such marriages is more often irritation and disharmony than social solidarity. As one of the best known of all village proverbs observes, "Marriage is the means by which the worst of enemies become the closest of relatives."

*584 When at last the question of the bride price and dowry has been settled to the satisfaction of both parties a date is set for the engagement. This event is in a sense the first formal step in the arrangement of the marriage, and its successful completion makes the arrangement binding. Should for some reason one of the two parties be unable to fulfill the conditions of the marriage after this point has once been reached, it is clear to all that they have failed to fulfill an obligation and that they are at the mercy of the other party. The point is nicely illustrated by the case of a village marriage which failed because the girl ran away with another man while her fiance was in the army. Knowing full well that this was the case, the groom's family went ahead with their arrangements for the wedding, and on the prearranged day hired taxis and went to the girl's village to claim the bride. When the girl's parents had to admit in the presence of their assembeled and curious neighbors that there was no bride, the groom and his parents demanded compensation for their loss, including the bride price, the cost of the gold jewelry, the expense of the waiting wedding feast, and a sum of money to pay for such incidentals as the taxis. Since the groom's family had demonstrated their willingness to fulfill the marriage agreement, the girl's family had no choice but to meet their demands. The groom and his relatives were therefore

*584 able to completely recoup their financial loses and exonerate their family's reputation. They returned to Hsiachichou laughing and cheering, delighted with their complete victory, and all sat down to a "wedding" feast.

The engagement is always held in the home of the bride's family, and is typically attended by the bride and her close relatives, the go-between, the groom's father and mother, and perhaps the groom's father's brothers or his father's father. The groom himself is never present. There is always a feast at which many of the members of the two families meet for the first time, and there is therefore always much toasting and an exchange of formalized greetings. So far as the progress of the marriage itself is concerned, however, the core of the engagement consists of a simple ceremony in which the future mother-in-law *584 606 presents her son's bride with a gold ring. The bride sits with her back to her family altar facing the door of the *kōng-thiâ*: a position which symbolizes her departure from the family, and her mother-in-law places the ring on the index finger of her right hand. The significance of the ceremony lies in the fact that it represents the commitment of the two families to the marriage, and that it is also taken to presage the future relationship between the mother-in-law and daughter-in-law. According to popular tradition, if the mother-in-law manages to slip the ring past the younger woman's knuckle she will be able to dominate her daughter-in-law, while if she fails, the daughter-in-law will be able to maintain a certain independence in her new home. The morning before any engagement one will always hear a girl's mother and her paternal

584 606 aunts urging her to keep her finger stiff and not let the mother-in-law dominate her. Although in most instances either the mother-in-law or the daughter-in-law will give in to the other, it occasionally happens that two strong willed women meet, and there is then a brief but tense struggle as the ring is placed on the girl's finger, this possibility being the issue which gives a sense of climax to every engagement.

584 585 183 When the two parties to a marriage are both very poor they may agree to holdthe engagement and wedding on the same day as a means of saving money, but it is generally recognized in Hsiachichou that to be proper the engagement and wedding should be separated by at least a year. The result is that most weddings take place quite some time after the engagement. Families who cannot afford a separate engagement and wedding will not ordinarily undertake the preferred form of marriage at all, preferring to adopt a "little daughter-in-law", while those families who can afford the preferred marriage will usually not want [584] to risk their face by telescoping the engagement and wedding. As we shall see later, one of the primary motivations for undertaking the preferred form of marriage is that the cost of such a marriage gives a family an opportunity for enhancing their social standing, and so any family which chooses to undertake such a marriage is not going to off-set the prestige of the marriage by carrying it out in anything but the proper manner.

585 The wedding which climaxes the preferred form of marriage is always an occasion of some magnitude. The typical village wedding is attended by at least a hundred people, and we witnessed one wedding which had

585 attracted some two to three hundred guests. These ordinarily include the bride's immediate family, her personal friends, and an assortment of her relatives; the groom's family and his personal friends; the groom's maternal relatives and most of his paternal relatives; and often the groom's neighbors and business acquaintances. Those families who are distantly related, or who live at some distance from the village, ordinarily send only one of their members, usually the head of the household, to represent the family, but in the case of more closely related relatives and neighbors the entire family will attend the wedding. The women gossip and sometimes help in the kitchen with the preparation of food; the men stand about in small clusters talking and smoking; and the children organize themselves for playing "wedding," hop-scotch, or tops. The result is what the villager's call lǎu-ziât, "noise " or "enthusiasm," and it is a good wedding when there is much lǎu ziât, wealthy families sometimes hiring a professional band to stand in front of the house and add to the uproar.

The wedding itself begins when the go-between leads a procession of the groom and his friends and relatives to the girl's home to claim the bride. When they arrive in the girl's village they are usually greeted by a large gathering of the bride's friends and relatives who have been called to eat the traditional wedding cakes, and there naturally follows an exchange of introductions and greetings between the two
585 parties. Amidst these otherwise festive surroundings occurs what is
591 perhaps one of the most tragic scenes in all of village life. Every
152 bride knows that once she leaves her parental home she can never return.

585 591 152 No matter how cruelly her mother-in-law may treat her, no matter how unattractive or incompetent her husband, she must make her life in their home or else somehow manage her own support. As one village woman put it, "You can go home to your parents, and they may sympathize and let you stay for a few days, but you will still have to go back to your husband's family. Your parents can't be expected to feed you all of your life. Once you are married the rice is cooked." Since the bride will have only just met her husband's parents, and perhaps never have seen her husband himself, her departure from her parents home is a great and uncertain step in her life. It is not surprising that most brides forget their wedding finery and plead with their parents to allow them to stay in their natal home. Tradition asks of them that they make some display of reluctance as a means of showing affection for their parents, but it is clearthat the painful leave-takings are less a formality and more a sincere expression of fear and foreboding.

585 When at last the go-between manages to lead the reluctant and crying bride out ofthe house to the waiting procession, her friends and relatives gather around to bid her farewell. "May you soon bear a son." "May your childbirth be easy." "May you soon become a mother-in-law yourself." Upon its arrival in the groom's village the vehicle containing the bride is immediately surrounded by crowds of curious adults and dozens of children who chant nasty little ditties. "The bride is like a pig; the new bride has big legs; the new bride is fat like a sow." This trial usually continues for some fifteen or twenty minutes while the go-between makes last minute preparations for the

585 bride's entry into the house, and then at last the girl is led into the house and presented to her husband's ancestors. Thus begins the lifelong process of her incorporation into her husband's family. The birth of her first child will affirm her position in the family, but it will not be until she dies and takes her own place on the family altar that the process will be completed.

The festivities which occupy the remainder of the day, and which often last on into the following day, are much less concerned with the bride and groom than they are with the importance of their two families. The female guests in the house pass in and out of the new couple's bedroom for another look at the new bride, and his friends joke with the groom and attempt to get him drunk, but otherwise the bride and groom
585 pass from the center of attention. At the major feast of the day it is
273 the groom's mother's brother, not the groom, who sits at the seat of
521 honor, and the various speeches and toasts offered by local notables
[604] tend to be more concerned with the family's reputation and status than with the happiness and future of the newlyweds. The family history is described as long and illustrious; the names of notable members of the family are recalled for renewed honor; and assurances are given that the family's name will shine and their fortune prosper. The more the speakers drink, the more lavish and general the congratulations. The schoolmaster is praised for his erudition and scholarly accomplishments; the village mayor is thanked for his great contributions to the general welfare; and the community is described again and again as having a widely respected reputation in the eyes of its neighbors. Each new

585 toast introduces a new round of flattery, and every drink exaggerates
[293] the virtues of those present. Later that evening some of the younger
[521] guests make their way to the newlyweds' quarters to hold something like a shivaree, but this is only as a side show to the feasting in the ancestral hall which may last until late at night.

*593 The formal marriage procedure is brought to completion three days
585 after the wedding when the bride pays her first visit to her parental family. From a functional point of view, the significance of this visit lies in the fact that it constitutes a declaration of the bride's new status vis-à-vis her consanguineal relatives. She left her parental home as a daughter and an intimate member of her natal family; she now returns as a member of another family and as a guest. Her mother or her sisters serve her tea in the kông-thiâ: as they might serve a respected guest, and it is expected that these former intimates will now make at least a show of formality. The ceremony is, in fact, referred to as cuè-khěq, "being a guest." After this first visit the the bride may return to her home from time to time to visit with her relatives and commiserate with her mother, and it is expected of her that she return for a somewhat more formal visit every New Year. As time passes, however, and the girl becomes more and more secure in her new home, she visits her parental family less and less often, so that one finds that many older women do not return to their natal home even at New Years. As one informant explained, "Once you have children you are too busy, and then your parents die so that you don't know anyone there anymore, and finally you just don't feel like going back there."

CHAPTER 4

THE ALTERNATIVES

583 183 582 In the ideal Chinese world it would only be by means of the preferred patrilocal marriage that a person would exchange his status in one family for membership in another. Every family would bear sons who would marry and live with their parents, and every girl would leave her natal home as a young adult to become a daughter-in-law in her husband's family. Although we are very much inclined to doubt it, this ideal may have been realized in other parts of China. In Hsiachichou only a minority of the changes in family membership take place by means of the preferred marriage. Our genealogies include 167 cases of men and women who were born into village families which they later left by way of marriage or adoption, and 236 cases of men and women who were born elsewhere and later entered village families by marriage or adoption. Of these 167 persons leaving Hsiachichou 32 left by means of the preferred marriage, and of the 236 persons entering village families 74 came by way of the preferred marriage. Among those men and women who entered village families by way of adoption, 29 eventually married out of their foster families in the preferred way. We therefore find that of 196 persons leaving village families only 61 (31 percent) left by way of a preferred marriage, and of 236 persons entering village families only 74 (31 percent) came by way of a preferred marriage. While there can be no doubt that the preferred marriage was the ideal

*583 183 582 way for a family to arrange its composition, it is obvious that there are other means which are just as important in practice.

*584 *591 *583 In Hsiachichou a common alternative to the preferred marriage is what we will hereafter refer to as the sīm-pûà, or "little daughter-in-law," form of marriage. Such marriages involve the male's family taking a prospective daughter-in-law into their household when the girl is still a child. She then grows up as a member of their kê much as though she were a daughter of the household, finally becoming a wife and daughter-in-law in the family when she is married to one of her foster family's sons. Although they may be adopted as late as four or five years of age, most sīm-pûà enter their future husband's family at a very young age, the average being somewhere between two and two and a half years. A few of the sīm-pûà adopted in Hsiachichou were actually nursed as infants by the women who later became their mothers-in-law. Women who had borne a female child after the birth of a son and who decided they wanted to arrange a sīm-pûà marriage for the son gave away their own daughter and adoptedanother girl to drink their milk. While relatively rare simply because of the rarity of the necessary circumstances, such early adoptions are thought particularly desirable because "they make mother-in-law and daughter-in-law just like mother and daughter."

582 554 In the case of the preferred marriage the people of Hsiachichou have a clear preference with regard to the relative social status of the bride's and groom's families. Ideally, the twofamilies should occupy a nearly equal status, but if there is a discrepancy the bride

582 554 should come from a family of lower status than that of her husband. Village parents fear that a girl from a family wealthier than their 581 own will not make a good daughter-in-law. As one of our informants explained, "If a girl is from a poor family she will know about money and how to save money, but if she comes from a rich family she will be spending money all the time, and then it will be very hard for you if you aren't rich." One woman did tell us that choosing a rich girl might be a good thing "because you could make some money on the dowry," but later in the same conversation she also pointed out the disadvantages of such a choice. "If you marry a girl from a rich family she won't know how to work, and she will spend a lot of money because she *584 will be used to it." In the case of the *sīm-pûà* marriage, on the *597 other hand, the relative social status of the two families is not an 554 important consideration. They most commonly come from the same social strata, but they may also be from widely divergent family backgrounds, with either the boy's or the girl's family being the more privileged of the two. We know of one striking case in which one of the poorest families is Hsiachichou adopted a daughter from one of the wealthiest landlord families in the town of Hsulin. The economic circumstances of the two families were so disparate that the woman told us she never went to visit her natal family. "They are much wealthier than my husband's family and would just think I was coming [581] to ask for something." What apparently concerns a family in selecting a daughter-in-law is her ability to adjust to the routine of life in their household. So long as the girl is raised in their home

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554 there is no need to worry about the social status of her natal family,
[581] this being relevant only as an indication of the girl's personal habits.

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#597 By contrast with the preferred form of marriage, the procedure for arranging a *sīm-pūà* marriage is extraordinarily simple. Having once decided upon this form of marriage for a son, a family simply advertises this fact among their friends and relatives until they find a second family willing to give one of their female children in adoption. If they happen to have difficulty finding a family with a girl of the right age, and if they are also particularly anxious to arrange this form of marriage for their son, a family may ask the help of a professional go-between, but a go-between is not required as a matter of form. Indeed, very little is required by way of form in arranging the *sīm-pūà* marriage. Once they have located an eligible child the women of the adopting family will usually go see the girl to make sure that she is a healthy normal child, and if they are satisfied that this is the case the arrangements for the marriage (or adoption, as you please) can be completed almost immediately and with a minimum of formality. According to village informants, the only concern of the girl's parents will be to see that the family does indeed have a son of the right age "and that the mother-in-law has milk to nurse the child." As a matter of courtesy, the adopting family will usually send the girl's parents a "bride price," but this is never more than a token amount of three or four hundred dollars. There is therefore no occasion for the angry and prolonged bargaining which characterizes the negotiations of the bride price in the case of the preferred marriage.

*584 Such ceremony as is associated with the *sīm-pūà* form of marriage
585 is likewise very simple. As was the case with all brides thirty or
*597 forty years ago, the girl will ordinarily be dressed in red the day her residence is transferred from her parental home to her future husband's home, and it is common for families in Hsiachichou to take the girl home "to be a guest" several days after the "wedding". But there are no feasts, no guests and no band, and often no go-between; in short, none of the activities that make a preferred marriage proper and successful. Later, when the girl is old enough to marry, it is necessary to perform a second ceremony to unite her with her husband, but this is likewise a very simple ceremony as compared with the preferred patrilocal marriage. When the parents feel that their son and their "daughter-in-law" are old enough to marry they will usually take the occasion of a New Years to present them to their ancestors and thus accomplish their union as husband and wife. Since there are always a number of guests in the house on the occasion of any New Years, there will always be a number of people to witness this presentation, but it is not necessary to invite guests particularly for this purpose. According to most informants, it is not even necessary for the girl's real parents to be present, this being what we might call an intra-family rather than an inter-family affair.

*584 The childhood status of the *sīm-pūà* in her foster home is something
*597 of an enigma. Given the obvious ceremonial equation of her entry into
*593 her husband's home with that of a bride in the preferred form of marriage, one might assume that her adoption is equivalent to marriage, making

584 597 593 her a married daughter in the eyes of her parents and a daughter-in-law in her family of procreation. One might easily argue that this is the reason her parents do not need to be present at the ceremony which gives her the status of wife. And yet there is other evidence which seems to suggest that while the adoption does give the foster family certain rights in a child it does not mean that she is married in the usual sense. If an adult woman's husband dies, she ordinarily remains a daughter-in-law in her husband's family, but in the case of a *sīm-pūà* the child's parents may demand her return if her prospective husband should die before the second ceremony. It is also generally recognized that the parents have more interest in the welfare of a child who is a *sīm-pūà* than they do in the welfare of a daughter who [604] [764] is married. When an adult married woman dies, her mother's brother may show his displeasure at the treatment she has received in her husband's family by knocking several of the male members of the family on the head with his cane when he comes to inspect the coffin, it being expected of the husband's family that they will wait kneeling at the door of their house for the arrival of the deceased's consanguineal relatives. But, as we have already pointed out above, it never happens that a married woman's family will take her back into their household, and they certainly do not have the right to remove her from her place as a wife and daughter-in-law in her husband's family. In the case of the *sīm-pūà*, however, the girl's parental family does have the right to demand her removal if they feel that she is being mistreated, and this does in fact happen upon occasion, although it certainly is not

*584 *593 *597 at all common. All one can say, then, is that while a sĭm-pūâ is in some sense married as a child, she is not married in the same sense as the woman who has entered into a conjugal relationship. She becomes a married woman vis à vis her parental family only after the conclusion of the second ceremony makes her the wife of a male in her foster family as well as a daughter-in-law of her foster parents.

*584 *593 *597 602 [601] But whatever the status of a sĭm-pûâ as a child, the relationship between her natal family and her foster family is ideally the same as that between the two parties to the preferred patrilocal marriage. The two families are expected to use the usual affinal kinship terminology with regard to one another, and they are also expected to behave in terms of the roles associated with the use of this terminology. Such affinal ties are at best nominal, however, and in most cases they are not recognized at all. When she is still a child a sĭm-pûa will sometimes be taken to visit her natal family, and on occasion her mother may visit her in her foster home, but these few contacts seldom create strong ties between the two families. Most sĭm-pûa strongly resent their parent's having given them away in adoption, and as a result refuse to stay with their parents or sometimes even to talk to them. Moreover, those few girls who do establish some relationship with their parents do not ordinarily form attachments with their real siblings, so that once their parents die they are not inclined to continue a relationship with their parental family. A sĭm-pûâ's natal family and her foster family might, of course, pursue an affinal relationship regardless of the girl's involvement, but Chinese families apparently have much

*584 *593 *597 602 less interest in extending their kinship ties than many anthropologists have been led to suppose. According to informants in Hsiachichou, one of the advantages of the sīm-pûà form of marriage is that it saves one the trouble and expense of additional relatives. That most families enter into the sīm-pûà form of marriage with the expectation that the affinal ties will remain latent is indicated by a simple comparison with the preferred patrilocal marriage. Whereas the parties to the preferred marriage make elaborate inquiries concerning one another's social statuses, the parties to a sīm-pûà marriage are typically concerned with nothing more than the child's health.

*583 591 In the case of Hisachichou the customs characterizing matrilocal marriage are not as easily described as those which characterize either the preferred form of marriage or the sīm-pûà marriage. For one thing, the procedures by which one arranges a matrilocal marriage are not clearly defined, the attitude of the villagers being that one arranges a matrilocal marriage as best one can. For another, there are several categories of matrilocal marriage, each of which has some distinctive characteristics. When a villager says of any particular marriage that the husband was "called in" he may be referring to any one of three different arrangements. One extreme form includes those husbands, who, from a structural point of view, may be considered male brides. At the time of their marriage these men resign their place in their own line of descent and take on instead the obligations and privileges of a son in their wives' line. Like a woman in either the preferred form [611] [553] of marriage or the sīm-pûà marriage, they replace their father's surname

*583 with the surname of their spouse, and in so doing they tactitly agree
591 that their children will all follow in that line of descent. But while
611 [553] this form of marriage is recognized as legitimate, and is indeed taken
as the model for matrilocal marriages, such marriages are not at all
common in Hsiachichou. We know of only 2 marriages which could be
classified as examples of this extreme form.

Much more common in the case of Hsiachichou is a form of marriage
which involves a compromise between the paternal and maternal principles.
Rather than entirely resigning his proper position in his own line
of descent, the male who makes such a marriage retains his own surname,
and also makes provision that at least one of his male offspring will
take this name. At the time of the marriage, for example, it may
be agreed that the first born son will take the mother's surname,
leaving the other children to acquire their descent in the normal way.
*583 Men who make such marriages ordinarily take up more or less permanent
591 residence with their wives' parents with the result that they become
606 sons of the family in effect if not in name. They contribute their
[428] earnings and their labor to the general welfare of the family; they
recognize the authority of the wife's father as head of the household;
and they often inherit from their wife's parents. The extent of the
obligations of such a husband to his wife's parents is considered a
negotiable matter, however, and in some cases the man may only agree
to spend some specific period of time as a member of the wife's house-
*583 hold, the arrangement being that after this time has elapsed he is free
591 to take his wife and children and establish an independent _kâ_. In
611

*583 611 591 such cases the children who bear the wife's surname will ordinarily accompany their parents when the household is divided, but they nonetheless remain in the mother's father's line of descent, and it is to their mother's parents that they must look for their inheritance.

*583 581 591 611 At the opposite extreme from the marriage in which the husband becomes a son of the family is the case in which he takes up residence with his wife's family without any prejudice to his rights as a father. The man agrees to live with his wife's parents and to accept their authority with regard to family finances and the daily management of the household, but he retains his own surname and the right to see all of his children acquire their descent in the normal way. As in the case in which there is some compromise of the normal rule of descent, the length of time the husband is obliged to live with his wife's parents is negotiable, and this is commonly some specifically limited period of time. Such marriages frequently involve a family whose daughters are a number of years older than the family's eldest son. Fearing that they will not be able to support themselves until their sons are old enough to assume responsibility, the parents arrange a matrilocal marriage for one of their daughters as a means of temporary support. The husband receives his wife on the understanding that he will help to support her parents until their sons are old enough to assume this responsibility, at which time he will be free to take his wife and children and establish an independent kê in the normal manner. Such marriages do not involve any distortion of the normal rule of patrilineal descent, and only a temporary qualification of the usual economic and social aligmments.

+584 +583 We have already noted above that in the case of the preferred form of marriage the arrangements are initiated either by the boy's family or a go-between acting on their behalf. The more general rule is apparently that marriage arrangements are initiated by the family which stands to gain a member, for in the case of the matrilocal marriage the arrangements are almost invariably initiated by the female's family [581] or their representative. As a result, the first questions to be asked in the case of the matrilocal marriages are questions concerning the potential husband's character. Is he a good worker? Does he drink or spend money on prostitutes? Is he filial in his relations with his parents and capable in dealing with outsiders? When they find a man who has the requisite qualities in a reasonable degree, the girl's family will then attempt to negotiate a marriage which will bring him into the family. For their part, the potential husband and his parents will want to know what his status will be in his wife's family. Whose name are the children to take? If some are to take the wife's name, which ones? How long is he obliged to remain a member of his wife's family, and under what conditions might he leave before the end of such time? What property might he inherit, if any? Each of these rather difficult questions must be negotiated and agreed to in detail. Primarily this is because there are various sets of terms under which a matrilocal marriage may be arranged, but partially the need for clarity in these matters derives from the deviant character of matrilocal marriages. Being deviant, the terms of such a marriage must be negotiated, since one cannot depend upon generally recognized rules as guides for behavior.

583 584 In upper class Taiwanese families the terms of a matrilocal marriage are usually set down in the form of a written contract which is legally binding on both parties. In the case of Hsiachichou, however, the more usual thing is for the arrangements to remain at the level of a verbal commitment, a practice which often creates difficulties in later years. The wife's family may think better of their earlier decision and claim that they did not promise the man a certain inheritance, or the husband may in later life re-evaluate the importance of having descendants and attempt to reclaim his children. In one case which caused a great deal of concern during our stay in Hsiachichou a man who was residing with his wife's family claimed that he was just living with them and that he had not agreed to marry into the family. As he put it to us, "You can see that I didn't marry into this family. Look at our registration book. If I had married in, the children would have her name, but they haven't. They all have my name." The wife and her parents, on the other hand, claimed that he had agreed to marry into the family, and that the only reason the children had his name was because "he sneaked down to the police station and got them to change the names." Since the wife's father was dead, the husband was supporting his wife's mother as well as his own family, but he claimed that he did this because he wanted to and not because he had to. As we shall see later, such disagreements are not at all uncommon, and they are undoubtedly one of the reasons for the unpopularity of matrilocal marriage.

*583 We were told by several informants in Hsiachichou that when a
*584 man marries into his wife's family the ritual should be a simple inver-
585 sion of the ritual of the preferred form of marriage. By way of giving
an example, one informant said that at the engagement the bride should
sit facing her family altar instead of sitting with her back to the
altar, this reversal symbolizing the fact that she is remaining in her
family rather than leaving it. But whatever the procedure may be for
carrying out the ideal matrilocal marriage, the fact is that in practice
most matrilocal marriages are carried out with a minimum of ritual.
[554] One reason for this is probably the simple fact that matrilocal
marriages are not prestigeful, particularly not for the man who is
marrying into his wife's family. There is no way in which a family
can enhance their social position by having an elaborate engagement and
marriage. Beyond this, there is the fact that the social situation
of the matrilocal marriage is so different that there is no motivation
for following the usual procedures. No man is willing to give a bride
price when he is making a marriage which is not to his advantage, and
there is no point in giving a dowry to a daughter who is not leaving
the family. One man who married into Hsiachichou is reputed to have
reversed the usual procedures and brought a dowry with him to his
wife's family, but this was a very unusual case in which for some reason
[185] the girl's family paid for the gifts. Marriage ritual is defined as
the ritual of the preferred patrilocal marriage, and insofar as any
marriage departs from this form it is without a ritual model.

583 We have seen that in the case of the preferred marriage the ideal
581 is for the two families to be of approximately the same social status
554 with any advantage being in favor of the husband's family. In the case
of the matrilocal marriages there is no particular preference concern-
ing the relative status of the two families, but there is in fact a
strong tendency for the status of the male's family to be considerably
lower than that of his wife's. Since a matrilocal marriage is an un-
desirable form of marriage for a male, men make such marriages only
because they are so poor that they are willing to marry for security
or for an inheritance. As a result, they are usually men from a socio-
economic level lower than that of their wife's family. If they did not
see some advantage in marrying into their wife's family, they would not
583 make a matrilocal marriage at all. The selection of the groom in the
582 case of a matrilocal marriage also differs from the choice of a bride
for a preferred marriage in that the general preferences for village
exogamy and ethnic endogamy are not observed. Although most families
would probably prefer a son-in-law from outside the village and within
the same ethnic group, it is so difficult to find a man willing to
make such a marriage that the girl's family is often forced to accept
any man they can find. With the exception of the four cases in which
a sīm-pûà married an agnate of her foster family, we do not find any
preferred marriages involving two residents of Hsiachichou, and we
know of only one case of a preferred marriage which involved a main-
land Chinese. By contrast, the much smaller number of matrilocal
marriages includes two endogamous marriages and three cases in which

*583 a family living in Hsiachichou took a mainland Chinese as a son-in-law. 582 While the villagers may be prejudiced against marriages with Chinese from the mainland, any son-in-law [illegible]etter than no son-in-law at all.

*583 591 One final form of marriage should be mentioned for the sake of completeness. This is what the villagers refer to as a ciŏu-zîp-chǔa-chǔt marriage. When a man marries into his wife's family he is spoken of as "having been called in," ciŏu-zîp; and when a woman marries out of her family she is spoken of as having "left the family," chǔa-chǔt. A ciŏu-zîp-chǔa-chǔt marriage is thus a marriage in which "the man enters and the woman leaves." As the term suggests, this form of marriage is a compromise between the patrilocal and matrilocal forms [606] of marriage. What happens in practice is that the woman takes up residence in her husband's home in the usual way, while the husband assumes some degree of financial responsibility for his wife's parents. [551] [559] In most marriages of this kind the children take their father's surname, although some informants claim that it is possible for one 178 *583 child to take the mother's surname. To date only one such marriage has occurred in Hsiachichou, but they are said to be fairly common in cities such as Taipei, and one can easily see that they might very well become more common in Hsiachichou in the future. As we shall see, recent changes on Taiwan have given younger villagers more and more authority with regard to marriage, and as a result it is becoming more and more difficult for parents to force their daughters into matrilocal marriages. It may therefore be that in the future many families will have to settle for the ciŏu-zîp-chǔa-chǔt marriage in place of

*583 178 [581] the traditional matrilocal marriage. Such marriages do at least provide for the economic security of families who do not have sons of their own, and as the times change there will undoubtedly be a weakening of the beliefs that now make it important for parents to have a large family and descendants of their own.

*597 The most important single criterion distinguishing the various forms of adoption recognized in Hsiachichou is the sex of the adopted child. The childless American family will usually first decide whether or not they want to adopt a child, and after this decision is made they will then consider the sex of the child. Often they do not care whether the child is a boy or a girl; their goal in adopting is to obtain a child. The situation is very different with the average Hokkien family. To them the adoption of a male and the adoption of a female are not alternative ways of satisfying the same need. A family who is interested in adopting a male child will not ordinarily consider the possibility of adopting a female child, and the family who is thinking of adopting a female child is often not at all interested in the possibility of adopting a male. The motivation for the two forms of adoption often springs from different concerns, and the two acts are recognized as always having very different social consequences.

*597 192 602 The language of adoption in Hsiachichou recognizes two distinct forms of male adoption. In one case, the act of adoption is referred to with the verb chī, and the adopted child is spoken of as a kùe-pńg-kìa:. In the other, the verb indicating the act of adoption is either bũe or bùe, depending upon whether one is speaking of the family who is

4 599 giving the child or the family who is receiving the child, the adopted
192 child being termed a biẽng-liẽng-kià:. Although no term with a social
602 referent ever has an exact equivalent in a language spoken in another society, the verb chī is not too inappropriately translated with the English verb "to adopt." The adoption does not in any way alter the existing social relationship between the two families who are parties to the adoption, nor does it involve an exchange of gifts or compensation for the one family's loss of a member. As is the case with adoption in most English speaking countries, rights in the child are transferred freely and without further social implications. The difference is that whereas the English verb "to adopt" is appropriately used for any transaction involving the transfer of rights in a child, the use of the Hokkien term chī is limited to those cases in which the two families are agnatically related. When the parties to the adoption are not agnates the act of adoption is referred to with the verbs bũe and bùe. The family who receives the child is said to have "bought" him (bùe), and the family who gives the child in adoption is said to have "sold" him (bũe). As in the case of adoptions involving agnates, such transactions do not alter existing social relationships, but they do involve the payment of a considerable sum of money by the adopting family. The use of the verbs "to buy" and "to sell" is not metaphorical. Whereas a family adopting a child from an aganate is not required to give any compensation whatsoever, the family adopting a child from a non-agnate must ordinarily offer what for most families amounts to the equivalent of a year's income.

*597 602 The use of the term *khe-páng-kiá:* to refer to children adopted from agnates suggests that such adoptions usually involve families which are closely related, the literal translation of the term being "the child who crosses the house." Since it is usually only close agnates who live in the same house, a "child who crosses the house" must be the child of close agnates, and this is in fact commonly the case. The term is appropriately used to refer to any male child adopted from an agnate, but it is seldom that such adoptions involve families who are not related in the first or second degree. The implications of the term *biẽng-liẽng-kiá:* are somewhat more obscure. A *biẽng-liẽng* is apparently a flying insect the life cycle of which requires the participation of the earthworm. After laying its eggs, the insect deserts them, depending upon the worm to hatch the eggs and thus perpetuate the species. A *biẽng-liẽng-kiá:* is therefore a child of parents who are willing to see him given over to someone else's care, they themselves not caring whether or not he survives. As the term is used in Hisachichou, it does not seem to imply any scorn of the child who is given away in such an adoption, but it does imply criticism of the parents who would be willing to surrender a male child. Considering the importance which is attached to the principle of continuity in the male line, such an attitude is not at all surprising, for the selling of a male child implies a lack of concern for one of the most highly regarded of all cultural values.

Among the wealthier landlord families of the Taipei basin a distinction is made betwen the status of an adopted son who is a *biẽng-*

*597 602 [428] liĕng-kiầ: and one who is kǜe-páng-kiầ:. Yuzuru Okada quotes a proverb to the effect that a kǜe-páng-kiầ: receives a full share of an inheritance while a biĕng-liĕng-kiầ: receives only a half share.[1] In Hsiachichou, however, the only distinction between the biĕng-liĕng-kiầ: and the kǜe-páng-kiầ: is in terms of their origin. Once they have been admitted as members of the adopting family, children who were formerly the sons of agnates and those who were the sons of non-agnates occupy the same position. They are both sons of their foster families. They take their foster parents' surname and are thus obliged to produce male children to perpetuate the family line, and they are equally entitled to a share of whatever inheritance the foster parents bequeath to their descendants. That one is of the blood of the family line while the other is not does not seem to be a matter of any concern in Hsiachichou. As one informant explained, "It doesn't matter where you adopt a son. Once you adopt him he is your son."

*597 *562 The situation of the adopted daughter is very different. Whereas adopted sons are distinguished in terms of their status before adoption, adopted daughters are distinguished with reference to their status after adoption. An adopted male is always a son of his foster parents, but an adopted female may occupy any one of several statuses. She may be a daughter of the family; she may be a potential wife and daughter-in-law; or she may be simply a family servant. *597 553 836 The existence of these three categories is most clearly reflected in naming customs and the application of the incest taboo. A girl who becomes a daughter of the adopting family substitutes their surname for that of her natal family,

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[1] Uzuru Okada, *Kiso Shaki*, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

*597 553 [835] and under no circumstances may she marry a member of her foster family or a member of their lineage. Her position in the family is the same as if she had been born into it. The girl who is adopted as a daughter-in-law always takes her foster familiy's surname as her own, but rather than entirely dropping her natal family's name she retains it in the second position, the same as a married woman. She is usually committed to marry some particular member of her foster family, and is perhaps [597] best thought of as an unmarried bride of the family. The girl who is adopted as a domestic servant does not in any way alter her kinship status as a result of the adoption. She retains the surname of her natal family as well as her original status with regard to marriage. She may later marry a member of her foster family, but the adoption does not commit her to such a marriage. She is an adopted daughter only in the limited sense that her parents have transferred jural authority over her to another family for some specified period of time.

*597 601 In Southern and Central Taiwan adopted females occupying these three statuses are referred to by different terms. A girl who is adopted as a daughter of her foster family is spoken of as a lông-lù, simply an "adopted daughter;" a girl who is adopted to marry a son of her foster family is referred to with the term sîm-pûà, "little daughter-in-law;" and a girl who is adopted as a domestic is spoken of as [184] cā-bô-kàn, a "female servant." In the case of Hsiachichou and Northern Taiwan generally, however, these terminological distinctions are not consistently observed. Girls who are committed to marrying sons of their foster parents and those who are adopted as daughters of the

*597 family are both commonly referred to as sīm-pûà, the term lông-lù
601 being used only in its written form and only then for the purpose of registering adoptions with the police. If one needs to distinguish between the two categories, one can use the descriptive terms "ũ tùi-tháu" and "bōu tùi-tháu", "those who have counterparts" and "those who do not have counterparts," but this alternative set of terms is only employed when in the context of the conversation the girl's marriage status is of particular relevance.

*597 This same tendency toward an amalgamation of the two categories is also apparent in the ritual of adoption as it is practiced in Hsiachichou. Regardless of whether or not the child is intended to marry a son of the adopting family, she is always dressed in red on the day she is introduced to her new home, and it is common usage to speak of the token compensation given to an adopted girl's parents as a bride price, ignoring the fact that in many cases the child is not a little bride. When a village prostitute adopted a female child as security against the possibility of her being unable to marry, she too dressed the child in red and spoke of the price she had to pay for the girl as a bride price. Since this woman did not have any sons at the time of the adoption, she was obviously not going to marry the girl to a son, but the adoption was nevertheless transacted as though it were a prelude to a marriage. The child was even taken to her natal family "to be a guest" three days after the adoption, the same as if she were an adult woman marrying in the preferred manner.

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But while the *sīm-pûà* and the *lông-lù* forms of adoption are not distinguished in terminology or in ritual, there is an important difference in Hsiachichou regarding the villagers' attitude toward the two forms of adoption. To adopt a *lông-lù* is neither more nor less prestigious than to adopt a *sīm-pûà*. The two forms of adoption are simply not comparable from the point of view of the adopting family because they are not thought of as alternatives. But when there is a choice between the two forms of adoption, as there is in the case of the family giving the child in adoption, the *sīm-pûà* form is more socially acceptable. Giving a child in adoption as a *sīm-pûà* is always regarded as being more prestigious than giving her in adoption as a *lông-lù*. When asked whether they had given a daughter away as a *lông-lù* or as a *sīm-pûà*, many village informants were reluctant to admit that they had given a daughter to a family who did not intend to marry her to a son. One woman who had herself been given in adoption as a *lông-lù* told us that this had only happened because her foster parents had tricked her father. According to her own account, her natal family was a family of some social standing, and would never have willingly given a daughter away as a *lông-lù*.

> "My father's older brother was a very well known man and my family only gave daughters to a family who had a son for the girl to marry. My foster mother couldn't get along with her husband, and so she didn't have any children. His mother thought that it was best to get a child for them, hoping that they wouldn't fight anymore once they had a child, and so she gave away one of her own daughters and adopted me to drink her milk. She wanted a child so badly that she told my parents that there was a son in the family, and then she borrowed someone else's son to show the go-between when she came. When my parents found out what had happened they were

> *597 *584 554 so mad that they said they were going to burn the go-between with firecrackers when she came to get her "red packet," and so the go-between didn't dare to come and get her money. My father's brother was an important man, and so she didn't dare come.... The reason my family only chose to give a girl to families with sons was to save a lot of trouble and because it sounded better. When an adopted daughter marries out of her foster family, people say, "Oh, that woman who married twice!"

*597 *584 *583 [435] This difference in attitude towards the two forms of adoption is reflected in the size of the bride price given in the two cases. Whereas the bride price in the case of sīm-pūà form of adoption is usually only a token of fifty or sixty dollars, the bride price in the case of the lông-lù form of adoption is often four or five hundred dollars. The family who adopts a girl without having a son for her to marry apparently has to compensate her parents for the loss of face they suffer in giving a girl away in this manner. Although this is only speculation, it is perhaps for this reason that a lông-lù adoption is sometimes spoken of as though it were a financial transaction. A sīm-pûà is always spoken of as having "married out" of her natal family, even before she actually becomes a wife, but the lông-lù is sometimes said to have been "sold." The term is often used scornfully, and implies something of the low regard in which this form of adoption is held.

*597 357 648 This negative attitude towards the lông-lù form of adoption stems in part from its having become identified with the adoption of girls as domestics. Hoping to eliminate the abuses resulting from the adoption of cā-bô-kàn, the Japanese colonial government attempted to outlaw such adoptions. Under the Japanese civil code one could

*597 357 648 only register an adopted female child as a lông-lù or a sīn-pûà. The adoption of female children as cā-bô-kàn was illegal and punishable by fine. The inevitable result of such a restriction was that the lông-lù form of adoption was used as a means of concealing adoptions which would formerly have been of the cā-bô-kàn variety. Because of the commitment to a marriage it was both difficult and dangerous for a family to register a cā-bô-kàn as a sīn-pûà, but it was easy enough to change the *597 357 child's surname and have her registered as a lông-lù. Even today one finds in the households of some of the wealthier Hsulin families adopted daughters who are clearly no more than long-term servants. Adopted by their foster families when they are five or six years of age, they are given their foster parents surnames and registered as lông-lù so when they reach the age of eighteen or nineteen they marry out of the family. In the meantime they are kept busy with cooking, cleaning, the care of children, and sundry other household chores. The only difference between their position and that of the cā-bô-kàn of fifty years ago is that they are not eligible to marry a member of the family because of their official status as a daughter of the family.

*597 548 A second reason for the relatively low status of the lông-lù form of adoption is its association with prostitution. As we shall see later, women who are themselves prostitutes often fear that they will not be able to marry, and as a result feel that they need to find "a stick to lean on." The natural solution is to adopt a daughter and [435] raise her to the profession. Considering that some of the successful [434] professionals earn as much as NT$5000 to NT$6000 a month, the three or

*597 542 [435] [434] four hundred dollars required to buy an adopted daughter is relatively cheap insurance. There are also professional dealers in such urban areas as Taipei who buy girls of twelve or thirteen years of age and then sell them to wine houses or brothels. Such transactions often require registering the girl as an adopted daughter in order to conceal the true reason for her change of residence. Li Teng-Yu reported in 1943 that of the 162 girls working in three brothels in Taipei, 139 were registered as adopted daughters.[2] The result has been that the lông-lù form of adoption has become so suspect that many people will not consider giving a daughter in adoption to a family who does not *597 554 556 intend to marry the girl to one of their own sons. According to a stereotype popular in Hsiachichou, it is only the very poor who will give a daughter in adoption as a lông-lù because they are the only people who care about the small difference in the amount of bride price, but like most stereotypes this one is misleading. The correlation between wealth and the likelihood of a family's giving a daughter in adoption as a lông-lù is primarily a result of the fact that the wealthy are more concerned about face. When they are reasonably sure that the girl is not to be sold into prostitution, a poor family will give a daughter in adoption as a lông-lù. Having little face, they have little to lose. A wealthy family, on the other hand, will not consider such an adoption regardless of the circumstances. Having face, they must be concerned to keep it untarnished.

*597 [184] The adoption of cā-bô-kàn was never very common in the village of Hsiachichou. In the years before World War II the villagers were too

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[2] Li Teng-yu, "Sīm-pūà to lông-lù" (Sīm-pūà and lông-lù), Minzoku Taiwan, Vol. 4, No. 11 (1943), p. 17.

*597 poor to adopt a child simply to aid with household chores, and in the
184 post-war years government regulations have discouraged those few
*597 families who might have considered such an adoption. Our concern here
128 will therefore be primarily with four forms of adoption, two forms of male adoption and two forms of female adoption. Since English does not provide vocabulary adequate for labeling these institutions, we will have to employ the Chinese terminology in order to avoid long and clumsy paraphrasing. The adoption of a male child from an agnate, we will refer to as the kùe-páng-kià: form of adoption, and the adoption of a male child from a non-agnate, the biēng-liēng-kià: form of adoption. The form of adoption which makes a female child a potential wife of a son of the adopting family we will term the sīm-pûà form of adoption, or the sim-pua form of marriage, since it is both; and the form of adoption which gives a female child the same status she would have had if she had been born into the family we will refer to as the lông-lù form of adoption, although it must be remembered that in Hsiachichou adopted daughters of this kind are more commonly referred to as sīm-pûà and are treated ritually as though they were sīm-pûà.

2:Wolf E-5 (1958-1961) 1964 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Hsiachichou

CHAPTER 5

THE DECISION MAKERS

192 [171] In his description of marriage practices in Singapore Maurice Freedman points out that there are significant differences between the English and Hokkien usage of ~~the verb~~ "to marry."[1] Whereas the English verb takes as its subject only the man and woman who are parties to the marriage, the Hokkien equivalent, the verb chǔa, may take as its subject any person who is a member of the kê, his father and mother, his father's father and father's mother, even his brothers *[599] and sisters. The same observation can be made of English and Hokkien verbs denoting the act of adoption. In English the only persons who can speak of adopting a particular child are the child's foster parents. In Hokkien, however, any member of the foster parents' kê may use the verb chī or bùe in speaking of an adoption.

*121 *592 *584 *597 The significance of these differences in usage for our present discussion lies in the fact that they reflect a difference in the social structure of the two societies. In most English speaking countries the primary responsibility for decisions regarding marriage and adoption lies with the future mates in the case of marriage and with the foster parents in the case of adoption. In most Chinese speaking areas, on the other hand, decisions about marriage and adoption are family matters

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[1] Maurice Freedman, Chinese Family and Marriage in Singapore, op. cit., pp. 100-101.

*121 in which all of the members of the kê have a legitimate interest.
*592 Who actually makes these decisions depends upon the composition of the
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*597 kê at the time the decision is made and who at that time is responsible
for family policy. If a man's father and mother are members of the kê at the time his wife bears a child, and if they also occupy positions of authority in the family, the decision to give the child away may be their decision; but, on the other hand, if the man's parents are not members of his kê, or if the authority of the kê is at that time no longer in their hands, the decision may be made by the man or his wife. Both situations occur commonly in Hsiachichou.

This variation obviously complicates the analysis of the problem we set for ourselves. In attempting to analyze the factors which enter into decisions about marriage and adoption, we are asking what people's motives are for choosing between various institutionalized alternatives, and these are obviously going to vary with the identity of the decision makers. A man looking for a wife will probably consider different qualifications than will his mother looking for a daughter-in-law, and a mother thinking of giving away one of her children is likely to be influenced by very different considerations than her mother-in-law
*121 might be in deciding whether or not to give away a grandchild.
*592
128 Ideally, we would like to know who made each of the decisions with
which we are concerned. Unfortunately, this information is not available. Many of the decisions were made fifty or sixty years ago, so that even if they were willing to tell us, no one in Hsiachichou knows the answer. Furthermore, the original research from which these

*121 *592 128 data are taken was not designed with this problem in mind, and so we do not have complete information for even those recent dicisions which people might remember. We will therefore have to be satisfied with inferences based upon our knowledge of the structure of the *kê* and the way in which this structure has changed during the past sixty years. While such inferences will obviously not be entirely accurate, they will probably not be very much less accurate than the villager's own reports. People are not only unlikely to remember the details of events which took place thirty or forty years earlier in their lives, but when these events involved decisions about such emotionally significant matters as marriage and adoption such memories as they have are likely to be distorted.

Initially then, we must determine who is usually present in the *kê* at the time decisions concerning marriage and adoption are made. We speak specifically of the time at which these decisions are made because the composition of the *kê* varies over time in a cyclical manner. *592 [178] Given the vagaries of nature, there are, of course, many variations in the cycle, but, in general, the cycle repeats itself in a period of approximately twenty to twenty-five years and includes three phases, the joint family, the stem family, and the elemementary family.

596 In the joint family phase, the *kê* typically consists of a man and his wife, their married sons and their wives and children, and perhaps an unmarried son or daughter. The father of such a family will usually be a man in his late forties or early fifties; his wife, a few years younger; and his sons and their wives young people in their early

twenties who have been married within the last four or five years. Unless the father is ill or in some other way incapacitated he will occupy the position of Kā-tiù:, or "head of household", and will manage most of the family's affairs, including their common purse. If his sons earn a cash wage, this money will be turned over to the father who will then redistribute it as he sees fit. In practice, a reasonably forceful and capable young man may exert a considerable influence in family affairs, but in theory at least all family decisions are the responsibility of the father in his role of Kā-tiù:. Unless the family is an exceptionally poor one, in which case one or all of the sons' wives may work, these women will share the burden of managing the kitchen, the most common arrangement being for them to rotate the responsibility. In actual practice, their husbands' mother will usually work side by side with them, but ideally her role is supervisory.

The arrangements of the joint family have very definite advantages for its members. It is difficult for a man with a plot of land the size of that held by most village families to earn a living for his wife and children. If he works his land he can usually feed the family with the produce of the land, but then he has no cash income to provide for the family's other needs; on the other hand, if he lets the land lie fallow to take a job as a laborer, the additional cash income seldom offsets the expense of buying food. A few village men try to do both, working in a factory or mine during the day and on their land in the evening, but this requires that a person possess exceptional energy. A much more efficient way of managing is for two or three men

596 men to pool their efforts, one of them farming their joint land holdings while the other provides the cash income, and this is, of course, the usual arrangement in the joint family. One of the men in the family, usually the father who is more experienced as a farmer, tills the family's fields, while his sons take jobs as miners or laborers. The family thus has not only all of its food provided but also a cash income to meet its other needs.

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462 Not without its advantage to the joint family is the presence of several able-bodied adult woman. The amount of work required of women in the average village family is enormous. Aside from cooking for a large family and caring for their children, women must chop and cook the food for the family's pigs; feed and care for their ducks and chickens; salt and store seasonal vegetables; wash the family's clothes by hand in the river; clean and maintain the house and furniture; help with the winnowing of rice at harvest time; and so forth, almost endlessly. The advantage of the joint family is that these tasks can be shared and rotated. One woman assumes the responsibility for marketing and cooking for five or seven days, and is then free for an equal length of time during which she can sew, tend to the special needs of her children,
*593 and perhaps even pay a visit to her relatives. To have time to visit
596 relatives is of particular importance to young married women who often have no friends in their husband's village and find a visit home their only recreation.

While the arrangements in the joint family have real advantages they also work to create equally real difficulties. The concept and

*593 precedent of filial piety is so strong that a father and son can usually 596 manage to share a common income without serious quarrels, but the traditional value placed upon sibling solidarity is more an injunction than a reality. Put in a situation of having to share, adult brothers usually end up hating one another. Of the various cases of physical violence recorded in our field notes the majority of those involving adult males are cases of fights between brothers. One brother may resent the fact that the other contributes less to the family purse and takes out equally, or one may feel that the other is secretly with-596 holding part of his income. The complaints expressed in the following interview are symptomatic of the tensions which characterize relations between the various units of the joint family.

> "You have been living in our house this long now. I'm sure you can see that our family is very complicated. I really don't like to talk about family business. If I tell people outside the family they laugh and wonder how we can get along this badly. If you compare the amount of work our half of the family does with the amount my uncle's half does, who works the most? Just look. When my uncle sees that I am very busy he won't even ask his children to do some easy job like taking the buffalo out to graze after school. This is work that the children of a farmer are expected to do, but he never tells his children to do it. I have so many things to do myself and then I have to take care of the buffalo too. There isn't anyone who doesn't know how to sit and take in money. If he wants the fields to grow up to grass, I can sit and receive, too.
>
> The other day my wife kept asking me to let her buy a pair of new shoes but I told her she couldn't because I didn't want the other half of the family to talk about us. So what happened? Everytime my uncle's wife walked out of her room she had on a new pair of shoes. Where does all that money come from? Whenever it isn't my aunt's turn to cook she is off visiting

> 596 / this one and that one. It is hard to believe that when you go out you don't have to spend any money. Does this money fall from the sky? When it is her turn to cook, my mother is always around helping her, but when it is my wife's turn to cook, my aunt is far away and her children sit there and cry and yell. Never once, even when it wasn't her turn to cook, has my aunt chopped up sweet potato leaves to feed the pigs. It is always my wife or my mother who has to do that.

*593 596 [178] As a result of these tensions the joint family phase of the family cycle is ordinarily short lived. Within a year or two of the time that the second brother marries most village families divide into two separate units. Although there were twenty men living in Hsiachichou in 1960 who had at least one married brother, there were only three kê which included married brothers. In ten cases two married brothers actually lived in the same house, sharing the same kõng-thiâ:, but each had his own stove and controlled his own purse, constituting a separate kê. In most cases brothers did continue to cooperate in the worship of common ancestors, and in at least one case shared the use of a water buffalo, but relations were typically hostile and distant. The animosities which cause the kê to break up in the first place are often intensified by the haggling involved in the division of the family property with the result that even as elderly men many brothers barely speak to one another.

*592 *593 After the division of the kê the parents either live with one of their sons and his family or live alternately with each in turn. There have been no cases in the recent history of Hsiachichou in which a man and his wife established their own independent kê after their children divided the family. There are various reasons for this.

592 593 888 By the time the division takes place a man and his wife are usually in their middle or late fifties and in many cases no longer able to support themselves. Since no one is able to save more than enough money to buy his coffin, the parents often have no choice but to live with one of their children. Moreover, even if they could afford to live alone few parents would choose to do so. The joy of an old person's life is to spend his declining years in the company of his children and grandchildren. Their progeny represent to most elderly villagers the most important and most satisfying accomplishment of their lives. To be separated from them would be unthinkable.

Which of the sons the parents live with after the division of the kê varies. In some cases they will live with the eldest son; in some cases with the second or third son; and in others they will alternate between two or three sons. In 1960 there were 33 people living in Hsiachichou who had at least one married son. Of these, 17 were living with their eldest and only married son; 3 were living with the eldest of several married sons; 5 were living with the second-born of several married sons; and 5 others were living alternately with two or more married sons. Which of these arrangements obtains often depends on where the sons live after the division of the family. Because of the scarcity of land in the village, it is common for one of a family's sons to leave the village after the division, and in this case the parents will usually live with whichever son remains. The old people are reluctant to leave their relatives and friends in the village for the strange environment of the city. Should more than one of their sons

*592 *593 881 remain in the village, the parents may live in the same room of the divided house in which they have always lived but take their meals with one family on some days and with the other on other days. On occasion, one also finds elderly parents who live alternately with sons residing in different localities. One of the most pitiful fates of anyone living in the village was that of an old lady who spent one month with each of her five sons who were living in five different areas of the Taipei basin.

596 594 621 As a result of the fact that most parents live with one of their married sons, the division of the family typically produces one stem family and one elementary family. The only exceptions are those cases in which the family has more than two married sons, in which case the division produces one stem family and several elementary families, and those cases in which the parents live alternatiely with several married sons, creating what we might call partial stem families. One might therefore expect to find in Hsiachichou an approximately equal number of stem families and elementary families in this stage of the family cycle, but this is not the case. As we have mentioned above, many young men leave the village after the division of their joint family, and when they do they seldom take their parents with them. Even if two brothers both decide to remain, this will usually not create an elementary family in the village because the parents are then likely to live alternately with the two families. The result is that one finds very few elementary families living in the village whose senior members are a young married couple. Although there were 24 elementary families living in

596 Hsiachichou in 1960, only 5 were families in which the senior generation
594 was under forty years of age, and of these 5 cases 3 were families in
621 which the parents had died at an abnormally early age. Insofar as the population of Hsiachichou is concerned, the product of family division is either one stem family or several partial stem families. Elementary families with a young membership may have been more common thirty or forty years ago before immigration to the city became common, but even then they probably never constituted a major part of the village population. There were fewer parents then who had more than one son reach marriageable age, so that fewer families divided.

596 In a few stem families one finds much the same structure as is found
886 in the joint family, the father serving as kā-tiù: and managing the family finances. As a general rule, however, a father will turn over the effective management of the family to a son as soon as he is no longer able to contribute to the family income, and, since most fathers will have reached this age shortly after the time at which the family is divided, it is usually a son who is the manager of the stem family. Some fathers will retain the official title of kā-tiù:, continuing to represent the family in village affairs and at weddings, funerals, and religious festivals, but a son usually assumes the responsibility for the internal affairs of the family. In theory, a son should always defer to his father should he care to express himself on any particular issue, but in practice many old men have very little voice in the affairs of their kê. The feared Chinese patriarch of western imagination is, in fact, often nothing more than a poor wretch complaining that his sons refuse him tobacco money.

596 599 178 The stem family usually lasts five to seven years and is then reduced to an elementary family upon the deaths of the senior generation. The next phase of the family cycle, that of the elementary family, typically lasts somewhere between five and ten years. Whether it is shorter or longer depends, of course, upon how young the grandchildren of the family marry and how long the grandparents live. On the average it has probably remained fairly constant over the past fifty years. [582] The higher standards of living of the past two or three decades have tended to lengthen the average lifespan, but this has been offset by the fact that during the same period of time the age at marriage has moved up from somewhere between 18 and 19 years to between 22 and 23. Very few of the young married couples in Hsiachichou in 1960 were living in the same house with a grandparent. Of the 15 married men under the age of thirty only 4 lived in a family which included one grandparent, and none of these lived in families in which both grandparents were alive.

*593 The phase of the elementary family might be characterised as one of relative quiesence. For the husband, his quarrels with his brothers are no longer active concerns, and such tension as there may have been between him and his father has been terminated by his father's death. For his wife, the long period of trial with her mother-in-law is over, and as yet she does not have a daughter-in-law of her own. Later a man may have difficulties with his own sons, but at this age they are usually very much under his control. We must not forget, however, that while there may be few tensions in the family at this

593 point in its history, most of the members of the family have lived through all the phases of the family cycle. Nearly every man in his fifties has been both a son and a brother, and nearly every woman of
592 this age has been a daughter-in-law. In making the decision that will
593 initiate the next phase of the family cycle these people will have in mind their own experiences as members of such a family. We emphasize this point because of the impression given by various authors that simply because a third of the families in any sample at any one point in time are elementary families the people in these families have never had the experience of living in stem and joint families. Given the relative frequency of the types of families at any one period in time, one can infer the relative length of each phase in the family cycle, but one cannot infer that particular individuals have not had the experience of living in each kind of family.

592 There are, of course, deviations from the normal cyclical development of the family as we have described it here. In the case of one village family, a strong-willed father prevented his sons from dividing the family, so that when he died he left a kê composed of his eldest son's widow, her married son and his two children, and a younger son and his wife and six children. In another instance, two married brothers did not divide their parental family simply because they were amiable, quiet men who did not fall into the usual irreconcilable conflicts. More common than such extensions of the joint family phase of the cycle are cases in which the joint family does not appear at all. Many families were not so fortunate as to have two sons reach

*592 marriageable age, particularly in the early decades of this century, and a few were so unfortunate as to not produce any sons at all. Those families with no sons either adopted a son or arranged a matrilocal marriage for a daughter, but in either case there was usually only one marriage in the second generation, so that the joint family did not appear in the cycle. In a few instances families without sons were forced to send their daughters to work as prostitutes. These girls were often unable to marry but did produce children, the result being that the family was perpetuated without any marriage at all. In one particularly unusual case a village family managed to perpetuate itself for three generations without male offspring and without a marriage. But while such deviations have occurred, the history of most village families has followed the cycle we have outlined. It is only during the early decades of the period with which we are concerned that frequent exceptions occur, and these are all of one type. As a result of a high infant mortality rate, relatively few families of that time had more than one son reach marriageable age, so that the joint family phase of the cycle was not common.

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*597 We are now in a position to describe the composition of the *kê* when decisions about marriage and adoption take place. Let us take the question of adoptions first. As we shall see later, most adoptions take place within the first ten years of the foster parents' married life, the great majority within the first five years. Most decisions about adoption must therefore be made in the context of a joint family or a stem family, for we have seen that the elementary

*592 family does not appear in the cycle in Hsiachichou until the second
*[597] generation is over forty years of age. The only exceptions would be
those few cases in which a second son remained in the village without
sharing the responsibility for his parents' care, and the occasional
case in which both members of the senior generation died before the age
*583 of fifty. The timing of decisions concerning marriage depends upon the
*584 nature of the decision and the type of marriage. The decision which
*592 the family must make as to whether or not to bring a sĩm-pûà into the
family must be made when their son is a small child, and so, like
adoption, these determinations will usually take place in the joint or
stem family. Choices between the matrilocal and patrilocal form of
marriage, the type of matrilocal marriage, the particular girl in the
patrilocal marriage, will, for the first born son, almost invariably
take place in the elementary family. With the exception of a few
rare infant bethrothals, such decisions are not made until the
children reach a marriageable age, and by this time their father will
have divided the kê with his brother and his parents will have died.
The only difference in the case of a second born son is that by the
time decisions aoncerning his marriage are made the family will have
been expanded by his older brother's marriage.

*583 While there are thus differences in the type of family in which
*584 these various decisions take place, all decisions concerning marriage
*592 and adoption take place in a context which has one general feature in
*597 common. All include at least two adult generations who have an interest in the decision. In the case of adoption and the sĩm-pûà form of

*583 marriage, the two generations are the potential foster parents and
*584 either the foster father's or foster mother's parents; in the case of
*592 the preferred patrilocal marriage and the matrilocal marriage, the
*597 two generations are the young people to be married and one of their sets of parents. Our next task, then, is to establish which of these two generations was responsible for the decisions with which we are concerned. When we speak of the motives for adopting a child, are we speaking of the motives of the foster parents or of the foster grandparents? When we ask why a family decided upon a particular form of marriage, are we asking why the couple chose to marry in this way, or why their parents chose to arrange this kind of marriage for them? The answer depends on when during the past sixty years the de-
*592 cision took place. As a result of the various social and economic
*584 changes which have occurred in the past thirty years or so, the locus
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*597 of authority for making decisions about marriage and adoption has undergone a basic change.

*562 Forty years ago both the kind of marriage a young person made and
882 the particular person he married were chosen by his parents. Except
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[*584] in the occasional family in which the young women were needed to work in the fields, unmarried women were not allowed out of the house except in the company of their mothers or grandmothers, and even then they did not often venture out of the seclusion of the family home. To do so would be something less than proper. One old woman gave us the following account of a young woman's life in Hsiachichou around the turn of the century.

*562 882 178

> "Before women didn't go out of the house unless something really happened. One of our relatives who used to live here had a daughter and everyone knew they had a daughter, but no one had seen her. When there was that big flood and everyone was running for their lives, her older brother wrapped her in a blanket and carried her out. Even then they wouldn't let anyone see her. At that time buying and everything was done by the men. It wasn't like now when the women are the ones who take care of guests and do the marketing. The men who worked for the family were not allowed to go anywhere in the house. When they came back from work they had to go to their own rooms and stay there. If it was a big family there would be a separate room for them to eat in and to wash in. If they wanted water from the kitchen to take a bath in then it would be the men of the family who would come and get it for them. They couldn't come into kitchen. The women only did the housework and cooked. When it was about time to eat they would get all the food on the table and then go stay in the bedroom until all the men had finished eating. It wasn't very easy to even see a woman then. The only women you could see were old ladies."

*593 178 882

There was clearly little opportunity for romantic attachments to form, and even on those rare occasions when they did there was little chance for the young people to marry unless their preference happened to be their parents' preference as well. The authority of the parents over their sons and daughters was as nearly absolute when they were twenty as when they were two or three. The terms of filial piety provided a moral justification for unquestioned parental authority, and the importance of land in the economy gave parents the power to enforce this authority. There could be no prodigal sons because there was no place for the disaffected son to go. To earn a living one had to have access to land, and it was only through inheritance that such access could be achieved. It was the happy position of the parents of this time to have both morality and the economy on their side, and it was the unhappy fate of the young to be nothing more than sons and daughters, *584 178 In the case of the normal patrilocal marriage, the usual way to arrange a marriage was for the parents of a boy of marriageable age to enlist the services of a go-between. The go-between would make enquiries of relatives and friends until she found a girl whom the family might consider suitable. If, through indirect enquiries, she felt there was a chance of approval on the part of the girl's parents, she would propose the match to the parents of the boy. If both sets of parents showed sufficient interest, a long period of negotiation would commence to settle the content of the dowry, the amount of the bride price, and the number of cakes to be distributed. When, after much debate, these questions were settled, usually to the complete dissatisfaction of both families, a date would be set for the engagement. Even after the engagement the boy and girl were not allowed to meet, and in many cases had no idea at all of whom they were marrying. One old man told us jokingly that after he was engaged he went with a group of his friends to a festival at the temple to try and discover which of the women who came was his future wife. As he put it, "I didn't know whether she was going to be a bear or a tiger." One might say that the bride and groom did not become parties to the marriage until they were actually man and wife.

*597 178 The parents played an equally important role in decisions concerning adoption. If within a few years after marriage a young woman did not bear a child it was usually her mother-in-law who would initiate the procedure for adopting a child, and if for some reason it was necessary for the family to consider giving a child away in adoption

*597 178 it was usually the head of the family and his wife who made the final decision. We could cite numerous instances in which young women were provided with adopted children they did not want, and still more instances in which young mothers were forced to give in adoption children whom they would have kept.

*584 178 The years between 1920 and 1940 brought about some changes in the marriage customs of the village. The gradual breaking down of the traditional values gave young men and women the opportunity to meet, and the romantic attachments occasionally formed sometimes influenced parental decisions. What is perhaps more important, the growing opportunity for wage work made young men more independent of their fathers. As a result, many parents conceded to their sons the theoretical right to approve or disapprove a proposed match. It became the custom for the go-between to arrange a tea at which the parties to the marriage, including the principals now, were brought together for a social meeting. In some cases a young man might make strong objections and overrule parental plans, but for the most part the young people were so embarrassed by the situation that they left the choice up to their parents. When a woman who had been married in 1933 told us that her marriage had been arranged by her parents, we asked if she met her husband before the ceremonies. She answered, "Oh yes, but we were so embarrassed that we didn't even look at each other, and left it all up to our parents." Another woman told us that when she was trying to arrange a marriage for her son he refused to go with her to meet the girl and her family. "He said the girl's family would all be waiting

*584 178 to look him over as though he were a pig up for sale. He told me, 'I don't care if she is blind or without legs. If she is willing, that's fine; if she isn't willing, that's fine too. But, I won't go to look at her.'"

*584 Of the 55 marriages in Hsiachichou made by couples now over forty years of age, 51 (93 percent) were arranged by their parents. It is interesting to note that at least three of the four exceptions resulted from the untimely death of parents, and that the young people in question sent a go-between to negotiate the terms of the marriage as though it were being arranged in the conventional manner. It would seem that one of the elements which made the young people submit to an arranged marriage was the fact that any other kind of marriage had so little prestige in the village. But while most of the marriages were in fact arranged by their parents, it is not true that most of the young people were satisfied with this state of affairs. They submitted to their parents will because that was the way things were done and because there were really no alternatives open to them. When we asked some of the older people in the village if they thought that their lives would have been happier had they been free to choose their own spouse, the majority agreed that they would have been much better off if they had had this freedom. The only positive thing said about the arranged marriage was the remark made by one woman, "If you arrange your own marriage you can't say anything when things go wrong, but if you let your parents arrange it you can at least go home from time to time and scold them for getting you such a bad husband."

*593 It was inevitable that once the younger people gained some
*584 authority in the family they would revolt against their parents in the
178 matter of marriage. As we have already seen, this process began in the early 1920 but it was not until the 1930 that the younger generation began to assert their independence in any degree. By this time the majority of the families in the village were dependent to some extent on a wage income, and since it was easier for a younger person to get a job, their voices were heard more and more often in family affairs. Even those families who were still primarily farm families could not answer the challenge of a son who threatened to leave the kê and support himself if the parents did not consent to his choice of a marriage partner. The high value which the older generation placed upon genealogical continuity and the realistic fear which they felt in facing old age without children began to work against them. The loss of an adult son was an irreparable loss, and parents were reluctant to risk it by opposing their children in the matter of marriage.

178 Perhaps of as much influence on the changing marriage patterns is
882 the very fact that the freedom the young people gain by their wage work also gives them new opportunities to meet members of the opposite sex. Young men and women work together in the same factories, travel back and forth together on trains to their jobs without the company of their parents, and have some opportunity to meet together in private. There is, however, still nothing like the Western notion of freedom of contact between the sexes. A young woman seen talking to a strange man in public will be very much gossiped about, and only a few years ago

178 the local hooligans took it upon themselves to severely beat a man seen
882 walking hand in hand with a village girl. Despite such reservations, however, there is now a good deal more contact between unmarried people than ever before. It is not uncommon and causes very little comment in the village to see groups of four or five young men and women walking together toward the local market town. Some of the young people from the village have even organized their own dancing parties without completely destroying their good names.

*584 In some cases parents still make the primary decisions regarding
*593 marriage, and in many more cases their opposition to a proposed match
178 is enough to prevent it. This is particularly true in the case of girls who do not, after all, have the position in the family that a son does, and remain under much more effective parental control. For the most part, however, the marriages that have taken place since 1940 have involved the principals in a much more active role. Of the 51 marriages that have taken place in this period, 24 (47 percent) have been completely arranged by the young people, and the great majority of those that have not been completely the couple's doing have taken place only after their approval was given. In some cases, particularly with the young men, the parental choice resulted from their own abrogation of their new "rights". In the case of the girls, the exceptions belong primarily to a particular type of marriage in which the parents are forced by the circumstances of their situation to retain their authority and use every technique in their power to arrange the
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178 marriage they consider best. We will discuss these exceptions in more
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178 detail when in later chapters we turn to the effect of these changes
128 upon the marriage patterns.

*592 To summarize, then, we may say that at the time at which most of
*584 the decisions which interest us here are made the *ke* includes at
*599 least two adult generations. In the case of marriage they are the
178 parents and their adult children, and in the case of adoption they are the foster parents and the foster grandparents. When we ask which of these people made the decision we must specify the period of time at which the decision was made. By and large, the decisions about marriage and adoptions that were made before 1930 were made by the senior generations, while after 1930 these decisions were made by the younger people in the family. We shall see later that this change has had an important effect upon the kinds of decisions which are made and upon the kinds of considerations which enter into these decisions.

2:Wolf E-5 (1958-1961) 1964 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Hsiachichou

CHAPTER 6

THE LIMITING CONDITIONS

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In terms of their long range effects upon the development of the family, decisions about marriage and adoption may have one of two possible consequences. They may serve to perpetuate the family's existence as a social entity, or they may bring about the demise of the family with the death of its present members. For example, a family with only female children may give them away in adoption or allow them to marry out of the family, thus precluding the possibility of descendents, or they may adopt male children or arrange a matrilocal marriage for one of their daughters as a means of insuring genealogical continuity. From the point of view of society, as it is represented in the institutions of the village, either of these two choices are within the range of social possibility. From the point of view of the individual family, however, any choice which leads to the death of the family line is not a real alternative.

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The motivation to achieve social continuity is as strong among the people of Hsiachichou as the biological urge to reproduce. To die without children and without hope of grandchildren and great-grandchildren is the worst of all possible fates. We must therefore begin our analysis of decisions regarding marriage and adoption with a discussion of the reasons for this concern with social continuity. We have here a motivation which enters into all decisions concerning marriage and adoption, and which immediately precludes a

182 59 181 family's giving serious consideration to many socially acceptable alter-
natives.

511 [181] [182] The most obvious reason for this concern with social continuity
and the reason which is most easily stated by the villagers themselves,
[621] is economic security. The village of Hisachichou is not impoverished,
[262] but neither is it affluent. The line between the rich and the poor
separates those who eat rice at a meal and those who must mix their
rice with sweet potato. As the villagers themselves would put it,
"Everyone here has something to eat, but no one can afford to eat out
[463] of the middle of the pan." With the exception of those families who
have the advantages of neither land nor education, and who are as a
result forced to earn a living as coolies or coal miners, the people
of Hsiachichou are able to support themselves fairly comfortably.
[342] The majority of village houses are constructed of brick with sturdy
[209] tile roofs; many village families own a radio or phonograph; a number
[216] of families have their own water supply in the house and one has in-
stalled an electric pump; and all but the very poorest of village
families own at least one bicycle, adequate if not comfortable furniture,
and are able to meet their social obligations with appropriate gifts
[454] and invitations. What the average family in Hsiachichou does not have
is the financial ability to accumulate savings. Their income is
adequate to feed, clothe, and house themselves in a reasonably comfortable
manner, but there is no surplus out of which a family can create a
[426] reserve. When faced with a major expenditure occasioned by a serious
illness, a marriage, the funeral of a senior member, or the need to

511 426 build a new house, most families are forced to borrow money. As a local wit said, "In times of crisis the clever have to depend upon the stupid and the stupid have to depend on Tien Kung." Only the wealthiest three or four families in the community are in a posit[illegible] fall back upon their own resources in an emergency.

*593 602 888 One of the effects of living in such an economy is that no matter how hard a man may labor during his lifetime he will still be unable to accumulate the means to support himself in his old age. The most the average villager can expect is to be able to save enough money to buy himself a respectable coffin. He must depend upon someone else to support him when he is no longer able to work, and the only people who can be trusted to do this are his own children. There are no government or philanthropic agencies to which a man can turn for aid in his old age, nor can he expect much of his kinsmen. If a man lived all of his life with his brothers, contributing to the support and education of their children, these children would be obliged to support him in his old age, but if the family was divided, as is almost always the case, he could not expect even his brother's children to come to his aid. The mutual support which characterizes kinship relations in Hsiachicou assumes reciprocity. One cannot expect help from relatives when the situation is such that they cannot expect a return within a reasonably short period of time. When we asked villagers if they would support an elderly relative whose sons had died, they typically replied that "a person ought to do that." When we asked if they thought that their own relatives would support them if their sons died, *593 602 888 the answers given were less equivocal. The majority agreed that the most they could expect was "a cheap coffin," and many felt that even this was setting one's expectations too high, one man replying that "they would [185] just throw you in the river." The norms of the society enjoin a man to support an elderly and destitute relative, but there is little expectation that these norms will be honored. A man's only alternative therefore is to have children who are bound to him by the formal requirements of filial piety and the natural sentiment of the parent child relationship. As a villager explained, "On Taiwan no one asks you how much land you have. Here people ask you how many sons you have. You can work when you are young, but when you are old you have to have children to take care of you."

*593 181 842 888 When asked the most important reason for having children, several villagers insisted that economic security was the only reason. Playing on Mencius's famous dictum, one man told us that "the most unfilial thing a son could do was not to support his parents," and another younger man answered by quoting a proverb to the effect that "it is better to have money in one's pocket than sons in one's house." But like all sarcasm and most wit, these answers only have force as comments on an accepted value. A man must have sons to support him in his old age, and he must provide these sons with wives if he is to expect them to fulfill their obligations as sons, but were old age security his only concern his interest in descendants would end here. As we have seen already, most men do not live long enough even to see their grandchildren marry, and so there is little need for a man to have grandchildren

*593 as insurance against a destitute old age. Yet one of the most compelling
181 concerns of most elderly villagers is "to see their grandchildren before
842
888 they die." In order to achieve this goal, they often force their sons
[581] into early marriages, and, if their son's wives prove barren, they may
threaten to repudiate them, or if necessary, even adopt grandchildren.
[764] It is a great joy for an elderly man to be able to say that he has
many children and grandchildren "to see me to the mountain when I die,"
and it is the great hope of every grandparent that he will be one of
those few whose funeral procession is led by a small child dressed in
blue, the mourning color for the deceased's great-grandchildren. Beyond
the need to have someone to support you in your old age is the need to
have descendants, to die assured that there will be someone to perpetuate the family line. To insure the comfort of one's old age is
an important motive for having children, but the full value of children
cannot be entirely represented in economic terms. They stand as
testimony of a man's having fulfilled his duty to his own parents, and
they make secure his own achievements and his claim on the future.

769 On the altar which stands opposite the main door to every
602 village home are the family's ancestral tablets, small rectangular slips
of planed wood, rounded on the top like grave-stones, and inscribed
with the posthumous names of the deceased members of the family. Since
the family is ideally patrilineal, these typically include the head
of the household's father and mother, his father's father and father's
mother, and so forth, for as many as five or six generations. The
general rule is that a family's tablets will include all of those

769 adults who died as members of the family. If two brothers of a previous
602 generation did not divide their parental household during their lifetime, one may find the head of the household's brother or his father's brother represented among the family tablets, or, if at one time there was a matrilocal marriage in the family, one may find among the tablets the names of the head of the household's father's sister and his father's sister's husband. In one unusual case we found hanging next to the family's altar a small red packet which was devoted to a man who had lived for a long time with a woman of the family after her husband had died. The family included this person's name among their tablets because he "had no family of his own and because he had been a member of our kê for a long time." The only deceased members of a family who are not represented among the tablets are those persons who died before they reached marriageable age. A person who dies as a child can only be included among the family's tablets after his own father and mother have died. If the family should happen to suffer some misfortune after their deaths, a shaman may suggest that this is because some previous member of the family who died as a child is angry, and it may then be necessary to add his name to the altar as a means of placating him. By this time, the person is always of a senior generation relative to the living members of the family, and so as a father's brother or a grandfather's brother it is only proper that he be honored as an ancestor. He cannot be so honored during his parent's lifetime because he is then of a junior generation, and also "because he was so unfilial as to die before his parents."

769 The ancestors are not considered gods, or, as one villagers
775 expressed it, "If they are gods, they are just little gods." Although they are thought of as having somewhat more influence over the course of events than the living, they are, like the elderly head of a kê, dependent upon the younger, stronger members of their family. Without descendants to make offerings of food and spirit money the ancestors are no better off than a man who has no sons to care for him in his old age. They are doomed to an existence as "hungry ghosts" who are vividly imagined as congregating outside temples where they beg for a living like destitute humans. A few villagers assured us that the ancestors "don't really eat those things," and that the offerings
769 are more "to show them that we remember them and respect them." But
[778] while such a conception of ancestral sacrifice has been common among the elite of China since Confucius, it is not the general conception
[774] of the majority of the population of Hsiachichou. Sacrifices made to a god are thought of as "gifts," or gestures of respect, but the sacrifices to the ancestors are generally considered a form of sustenance. The difference is nicely illustrated in the form of the two types of sacrifices. The sacrifices presented to a god never include rice or spices, only cooked but unchopped slabs of pork or a whole chicken or duck, but offerings to the ancestors are always presented in the form of a meal, the meat in various sauces, rice and rice bowls on the table, chopsticks, relishes, everything the same as it might be served to guests. Just how literally some of the villagers think of the offerings as meals is evident in the pains to which they

769 go in preparing special dishes for particular ancestors. When the family with whom we lived made their annual deathday offerings to the father of the head of the household they always included sweet rice cakes because the old man had been particularly fond of them.

769 Even those villagers who deny that the ancestors "really eat those
753 things" are somewhat less certain about what might happen if the offerings were discontinued completely. We found numerous examples of illnesses and other misfortunes which were attributed to the neglect of an ancestor. The various misfortunes of one village woman were attributed to her deceased father-in-law who was angry because she had failed to cook his favorite dish for the New Year's offerings; the illness of a child was ascribed to his father's deceased parents who were said to be angry because their son had made a matrilocal marriage; and the illness of another village child was interpreted as being the result of his grandfather's older brother's "coming to call him." This man had died without children of his own, and so the family was advised to give him their son in adoption as a means of
769 placating him. If a family neglects their duties towards the ancestors,
602 the ancestors may plague them with illness and other misfortune, but
577 it is important to note that the ancestors do not represent a more general morality. They are concerned only with their own good and the good of the family, not with general morality and the good of society. When we asked villagers if their ancestors would punish them for committing a crime, such as theft or murder, the typical response was, "Why should they do that? We are all members of the same family. We are

769 602 577 their sons and grandsons." Without exception, every instance of an ancestor's "coming to ask for something," a euphemism for misfortunes attributed to an ancestor, was explained to us in terms of the person's having neglected some duty to his family, not to society at large.

769 In return for the support of their living descendants the ancestors are expected to look after the general welfare of the family and to do their best to fulfill the specific requests of the living. When his ancestors fail in these duties, the average villager is angry and indignant, just as the ancestors are angry when he fails in his duty toward them. When his wife became ill a villager by the name of Lim Bi-kok appealed to his ancestors for help, and on their advice removed and rebuilt his stove at considerable expense. Unfortunately, his wife died. Worse yet, a few months later Lim Bi-kok's mother became ill, and again he appealed to his ancestors and again with lack of success. His mother also died. This flagrant failure on the part of his ancestors made Lim Bi-kok so angry that he took the family tablets down to the river, chopped them into little pieces, burned the pieces and threw the ashes into the river, proclaiming himself a Christian. Lim Bi-kok does not deny that there is some sense in which his ancestors exist; he only feels that "there is no use in making sacrifices to such useless people." [771] Since this episode, Lim Bi-kok has become a relatively wealthy man, and his prosperity is often cited by the village skeptics as evidence of the impotency of the ancestors, but ancestor worship is not so frail a doctrine as to be overthrown by one such example. Although it has now been fourteen or

769 fifteen years since Lim Bi-kok destroyed his tablets, his family is still the only family in Hsiachichou which does not make regular offerings to their ancestors.

The relationship between the living and the dead is a reciprocal
one. The living are expected to provide the means of support for their
ancestors in the next world, and the ancestors are expected to protect
769 and succor their living descendants. Such a conception of man's
842 relationship with his deceased forbears naturally makes it extremely important
775 for a man to produce children. The man who fails to provide descendants
to carry on the ancestral rites after his own death fails in his
obligations to his parents just as surely as if he had failed to
support them in their old age. Just as they needed rice and a
comfortable place to live in this life, so they need living descendants
who will continue to provide them with the necessities of existence
in the next world. Moreover, the man who fails to provide children
to insure the ancestor's future risks their loss of support in the
business of this life, and may actually suffer various disasters as a
[753] result of their anger at his failure. No villager would be
[illegible] surprised by a statistic which reported that illnesses were more common
among the children of matrilocal marriages than those of patrilocal
marriages. And finally, the man who fails to produce male offspring
condemns himself. Without children to make sacrifices to him after
his own death, he is doomed to an existence as a "wandering ghost,"
842 begging for scraps of food at temple doors. When we asked a number of
villagers the meaning of the terms hôu miã: and pâi miã:, "good fortune"

842 and "bad fortune," or "good name" and "bad name", many illustrated their answers by pointing to a man with many sons as an example of *hôu miã*: and one with no sons as an example of *pâi miã*:.

*593 842 606 Although the ultimate responsibility for providing descendants belongs to the male members of the family, the immediate responsibility rests with those women who are their wives. The fertility symbols with which the marriage ritual is embossed serve to remind the bride that her primary duty to her husband's family is to bear children. Until she has fulfilled this duty she must "walk quietly" in her husband's house. Because of the high cost of marriage, few families in Hsiachichou would even consider repudiating a barren daughter-in-law, but neither would they forgive the daughter-in-law who failed to bear them grandchildren. The mother-in-law will usually take every opportunity to remind her of her failure. To her, the girl's failure is a terrible disappointment, casting a shadow over what were to be the joyous years of her old age. Something of the bitterness which arises in such a situation is apparent in a comment we overheard while talking to a woman whose three children were all adopted. During the course of our conversation, the natural born daughter of the woman's sister-in-law interrupted and was told to go away and "stop being a useless girl." Our informant's mother-in-law happened to be sitting in the same room and took this opportunity to comment, "It doesn't matter very much whether children are boys or girls. What really matters is whether or not a woman bears children."

*562 842 Aside from her responsibility to her husband's family, a woman has more personal reasons for wanting to bear children. For one thing, barrenness is the most indelible of all stigmas. Old women who are quarreling will often accuse one another of being barren. It implies not only an abnormal physical state, but also something of a failure of character. To bear children is so important that those who *562 *593 842 861 fail to do so must lack some essential moral quality. For another, it is only through her children that a woman can realize her position as a wife. The only common ground between a husband and wife in the early years of their marriage is their children. Often they marry as almost total strangers, and etiquette demands that they remain distant to one another. As the village women express it, the children "give you something to talk to each other about." Finally, a woman's having any sense of security in her husband's home depends on her having children. Although the average village woman realizes that her husband's parents cannot afford to repudiate her, she also knows that they will never accept her until she provides them with grandchildren. It is by virtue of her children that a woman secures her status as a member of her husband's family. She herself may never become a full fledged member of the family until she dies, but as the mother of the family's male descendants she secures a position of respect. It is nothing to be a wife or a daughter-in-law, but it is a matter of pride to be a mother.

181 842 Beyond those reasons we have already discussed, there are more general, less easily exemplified reasons for having children. One has

121 only to observe the excited anticipation of the older villagers, both 842 men and women, when the birth of a child is imminent to realize that children have an intrinsic value. An old woman whose sons had not as yet given her grandchildren told us sadly of how quiet her house was, how lacking in noise and bustle. There is no life without children in the house. One also senses living in the village that children give a man a sense of fulfillment, of involvement in something larger than the narrow circle of the present. The young men who say that they will give up ancestor worship "when the old people die," nevertheless think of the family as an unbroken chain that began long ago and that will continue long after they are gone. Not to have children would be to take responsibility for breaking this chain, and, perhaps more important, without children the achievements of this life would lose much of their meaning. If by means of a lifetime of hard work and self denial, a man adds a small plot of land to his family's possessions, it does not appreciably raise his own standard of living, but when the value of the land is multiplied by its benefits to the untold generations that will follow, a man has reason for satisfaction. It is partially for this reason that a person must have children to inherit the property of his fathers. His father calculated the value of the land he acquired in terms of its benefits to his descendants, and if there are no descendants it is then worth no more than the few catties of rice it will yield before the present generation dies. As one of our thoughtful informants put it,

181 842

> "Our fathers leave us land, graves to care for, a business. If we do not have children to inherit these things in their turn, then the efforts of our fathers will be meaningless."

181 842 775 There are, then, many reasons why a family must have children and grandchildren. Without descendants a person faces an old age of loneliness and suffering which will continue into his existence after death. Besides his personal sufferings, he will bring down upon the long line of ancestors who preceded him an existence of homelessness and hunger. Even if he is among those few who question the active existence of a life after death, he will hesitate to assume responsibility for breaking the chain that began long before and could continue long after him. Given the values of the society in which he lives, the achievements of his own life will taste of the futility of last night's pleasures.

162 842 181 That this concern for social continuity is real is evident in the actual genealogical composition of Hsiachichou in 1960. At that time there were 79 men of thirty years of age or more living in the village, and 93 women of thirty years of age or more. Of these 79 men 6 had never been married, and 6 were married to women who had not as yet born children. Of the 93 women 12 had never been married, and 5 of those who had been married had never borne children. Yet of the 79 men all but 3 had living children or grandchildren, and of the 93 181 842 women all had living children or grandchildren. Social continuity is of such importance that regardless of the barriers which stand in their way almost every villager manages to provide himself with descendants. It may be by way of adoption, or it may be by claiming his or her

181 illegitimate offspring, but in one way or another the goal is achieved,
842 indeed, must be achieved. It is therefore obvious that we need not consider as real alternatives any set of choices that would lead to family extinction. Whatever else their goals may be with regard to marriage and adoption, a family must make decisions which will lead to the perpetuation of their line.

CHAPTER 7

DECISIONS BY GRANDPARENTS

4597 When a child is born in Hsiachichou his natal family has the choice
128 of raising him as a member of the household, or giving him in one or
[851] another of the various forms of adoption. How often do people in
Hsiachichou choose to give away their children? How often do they
relinquish their male children, and how often do they part with their
female children? When they choose to give away a male child, do they
usually give him in adoption to an agnate or sell him to a stranger
or a dealer? Are female children usually married out of the family
as "little daughters-in-law," or are they more commonly sold to fami-
lies which want a daughter? Are some children more likely to be given
out in adoption than others? If so, what are some of the considerations
4597 which increase a child's chance of adoption? As a result of changes
128 which have taken place in Hsiachichou during the course of the past
178 several decades, the answers to these questions depend in large part
on whether we are looking at decisions made early in the century or
those made more recently. We will therefore begin by considering those
decisions made in the years before 1930, and will leave until the
following chapter those decisions made after 1930.

178 Before 1930 the village of Hsiachichou was a poor if not an im-
511 poverished community. Although most of the villagers earned their
463 living as farmers, no family owned more than one acre of land, and most

178 511 less than half an acre. Many were tenant farmers who owned no land at
463 all, cultivating the fields of wealthy landlords in return for some
[427] percentage of the annual yield of the land. Until the relocation of the
Taipei Hsinchu railroad in 1923, a few landless families made a living
transporting local goods down the Tamsui River to markets in Wanhua,
[464] Hsinchuang, and Taipei. The only opportunities for industrial employ-
[316] ment were in the coal mines of Tucheng and Hsinchuang, and the work
178 there was often sporadic and always poorly paid. The generally low
511 standard of living in Hsiachichou was reflected in the construction of
342 333 village homes. Although kiln brick and tile had been inexpensively
produced in the Taipei region for at least a hundred years, there was
no one in Hsiachichou who could afford to build a brick house or to
roof his house with tile. Houses were built instead of wattled mud and
roofed with thatch. It was not until the early 1920's that the first
brick and tile house was constructed in Hsiachichou, and the use of
these materials did not become common until the end of the next decade.
Of the 47 houses in Hsiachichou in 1935 only 15 boasted a tile roof, and
of these only 4 had more than one brick wall. As the older villagers
so often put it in describing their former condition, "We were the kind
of people who had to sell our rice and eat sweet potatoes."

*599 Living so close to poverty and yet aware of the luxuries enjoyed
511 by their landlords and the wealthier merchants, many families in
435 Hsiachichou must have been tempted to sell one of their male children
as a biéng-liĕng-kià:. There was always a ready market for male children
on Taiwan, and the price they commanded was for most village families

*597 nothing less than a small fortune. A go-between acting for some local
511 party could usually get as much as a year's income for a male child, and
435 dealers who bought male children on Taiwan for resale in Amoy would some-
*597 times offer even more. The returns from the sale of a male child would
511 at the very least enable a family to replace a thatch roof with tile,
454 and it might even finance the purchase of a small plot of land or pro-
vide the capital for a small business undertaking. Since a family's
regular income went almost entirely for food and other daily essentials,
it was only by such means that a family might obtain the capital for
178 any major investment. We must also remember that it was not the parents
*593 of the child who decided his fate. Most children are born during that
*597
608 phase of the family cycle at which their grandparents are still alive
and active, and in the years before 1930 this senior generation had
complete and final authority over all decisions concerning marriage
and adoption. Although one can understand that a parent with only
one male child would be reluctant to sell him for any price, one can
imagine that a grandparent with several grandchildren might find it
somewhat easier to part with one of his sons' male children.

*597 While there were good reasons for a family to sell one of its male
*562 children, there were even more important considerations weighing against
842 such a decision. As we have seen in the last chapter, male children
181 are the focal concern of the Hokkien family. It is by means of his
male descendants that a man fulfills his most important responsibilities
as son and grandson, and it is with reference to his male offspring
that a person calculates the achievement of his own lifetime. If a

*597 family is to have any security in either this life or the next, they
*562 must have children who are obliged to them as heirs and descendants.
842
181 As a result, male children have an absolute value, their worth to their family being something which cannot be estimated in monetary terms. A family may be forced by extreme poverty to sell one or more of their children in order to support themselves and their remaining children, but they would never sell a male as a means of adding to their material possessions. To trade a male child for property would simply not make sense to most people in Hsiachichou, for it is with reference to sons and grandsons that property acquires much of its value. As one of our village informants put it when we asked him why so few people sell their sons, "There is no point in having money or land if you don't have children. Who will inherit these things if you have no sons or grandsons? And who will you have to carry on your family name when you are dead?"

*597 Of 110 male children born into Hsiachichou before 1930 only 8
735 (7 percent) were sold as biĕng-liĕng-kià:, and in every case the family selling the child was poor by local standards. We know that not one of these families owned land other than their own house site, and so far as their neighbors remember none had any income from a business or trade. Four of the eight children sold were sons of a village woman by the name of Ong Chun-a whose family was probably the poorest in the village. According to Ong Chun-a, "We had to sell those children. We were starving then, and they offered a very good price. Besides,
000 I had to sell my milk to make money." It is interesting to note that

*597 *593 It is interesting to note that Ong Chun-a's husband was the second of two sons, and that the older brother had several male children who were not sold. Ong Chun-a's husband's parents could afford to sell their second son's male children because they had other grandchildren to carry on their family line. If Ong Chun-a and her husband had been in a position of authority in the family, they probably would not have sold all four of their sons. When asked how she felt about selling her four children, Ong Chun-a answered, [198] "In those days we did what our parents told us." We do not know for certain who made the decisions in the other four families who sold male offspring, but the position of the children in the family indicates that it was probably their grandparents. Three of the four were the children of later born sons, and in all three of these cases the father's older brother had male children at the time the sale took place.

*597 602 It was thus only the very poor who ever sold any of their male children, and they only did so after the continuity of the family line was assured. What then of the *kùe-páng-kià*: form of adoption? How frequently did families give male children in adoption to an agnate? The question is an interesting one because the considerations which enter into the decision are entirely different. The *kùe-páng-kià*: form of adoption does not require the adopting parents to compensate the child's parents, and so there is no question of material gain in giving a child to an agnate. The family which relinquishes one of their male children to an agnate does so because they feel obliged to help their kinsmen, or because they hope that by helping their kinsmen they will create obligations which will later be of use to them. The decision thus

*597 602 involves weighing the relative importance of lineal and collateral kinship ties. The family which gives a child to an agnate naturally strengthens their ties with the adopting family, but they do so by sacrificing a potential tie with the descending generations of their own line. The question which a family must put to itself is this: Are strengthened ties with one's agnates worth the price of an heir and descendant? The answer is no. The frequency of such adoptions in Hsiachichou indicates a clear preference for lineal ties as the more dependable and more significant. [178] Although every family living in Hsiachichou has had agnatic kinsmen who did not produce sons in one generation or another, we find that not one of the 110 males born into the village before 1930 was given out as a kùe-páng-kià:. The only two such adoptions of which we have any record occurred after 1930, and neither of these are really exceptions to the preference for lineal ties. In both instances a child's grandparents decided to give a childless son one of his brother's male children. These two adoptions were thus made from lineal rather than from a collateral perspective, and did not invole a sacrifice of lineal ties for the sake of collateral ties.

*562 842 In speaking of a male infant a village mother will sometimes refer to the child as her pôu-pǔe, her "treasure." The term is never used with reference to female infants, nor is there any female counterpart of the term. The term which one hears repeatedly with reference to female children is the term liâu-cī-hǔe, "something to lose money on." Male children are "treasures" because it is through its male offspring

*562 842 that a family achieves its most important goal, the perpetuation of its line. Female children, on the other hand, are "something to lose money on" because the money invested in raising a female child is lost when she marries. Her children become heirs and descendants of her husband's family, and her labor and skills a contribution to the welfare of her husband and his relatives. Whereas a son will remain with his parents and support them in their old age, the most that can be expected of a daughter is that she will mourn her parents when they die. As a result, most villagers feel that it is imperative to have male children and see little point in raising their female children. As one of our more outspoken informants put it, "There is no point in having daughters if you have sons. Daughters are just things you waste money on. You feed them and take care of them when they are small, and then when they are old enough to help you they marry and belong to someone else."

*583 The family which chooses to raise their female children does, of course, receive a bride price when they marry, "to thank them for raising the girl." While this is often a considerable sum of money, it does not really compensate a family for the expenses incurred in the girl's upbringing. The bride price is usually barely adequate to cover the expenses of the girl's engagement and marriage, and often a family finds that the marriage of a daughter actually costs them money. A marriage in a family invariably involves a number of dinners and teas, and when these are held in the bride's home they are the responsibility of her family. [431] The family must also provide themselves with new clothes to attend the various festivities, and when they visit the groom's home they

+583 431 are expected to bring small gifts of fruit or perhaps tea. The major expense, however, is the dowry. At the very minimum a respectable dowry must include a complete wardrobe for the bride; a suit, hat, shoes, and shirt and tie for the groom; a bed, chairs, a wardrobe and other furnishings for the couple's bedroom; quilts and other bedding for the bridal couch; several yards of three or four woolen and cotton materials; a pair of candleholders and perhaps other decorations for the groom's family altar; such kitchen utensils as the bride will need for her personal use; a respectable supply of canned goods, tea, and other luxury foodstuffs; several rings, a necklace, and other jewelry for the bride's personal adornment; and at least a thousand dollars in cash. As the bride's relatives are often heard to comment on the occasion of a wedding, "A daughter's getting married is like a thief's getting into the house."

+583 554 On occasion, a very poor family will demand a large bride price and send only a small dowry in return, thereby managing to recoup some of the costs of raising the girl. This does not occur often, however, and for very good reasons. For one thing, the family which sends a daughter in marriage without a respectable dowry places her in a difficult position in her husband's home. The husband's family expects a dowry of approximately the same worth as the bride price, and if they are disappointed in this expectation the bride will find her parents-in-law "waiting with angry faces." For another, the family which sends a daughter without an adequate dowry risks the loss of their own face. Custom demands that a dowry be delivered to the groom's home on open

*583 hand-drawn carts, the contents laid out on sheets of red paper for all
554 to see. The children of the bride's family often spend an entire morning
pinning ten dollar bills onto the sheets of red paper to make the usual
gift of a thousand dollars cash as impressive as possible. Such a
colorful procession naturally collects crowds of curious housewives all
along its route, and their shrewd estimates often serve to fix the
family's social standing for years to come. As a result, few families
attempt to economize on a dowry, if not for their daughter's sake, then
at least for their own sake.

*593 We might therefore say that while male children are valued as heirs
*562 and descendants, female children are regarded as something on which one
842 stands to lose either money or face. Parents and grandparents may be
as personally fond of their female children as they are of their male
children, but it is simply not sensible for them to raise a number of
*593 their own daughters. If a family is going to raise any female children
*597 at all, it is better for them to adopt sīm-pûà than to raise their own
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*[584] daughters. A sīm-pûà can marry a son of the family and bear children
who will belong to the family, while a daughter is forbidden by the
incest taboo from ever playing such a role. She can only remain a
member of her natal family by making a matrilocal marriage, and such
[178] marriages are pointless if a family has sons of their own. A wealthy
[556] family can, of course, choose to raise both their sons and daughters,
but in the years before 1930 people in Hsiachichou were too poor for
such luxuries. The cost of raising a daughter might make it difficult
for a family to provide for their male children, and it would be

*597 *593 *562 impossible for the family which wanted to adopt girls as wives for their sons. Thus, we find in Hsiachichou in the years before 1930 a *597 *562 rate of adoption for female children that is much higher than the rate 178 of male adoption. Whereas only 8 (7 percent) of the 110 males born in the village before 1930 were given in adoption, more than half of the females born in this period were sent out in adoption. Of a total 103 girls born into the village before 1930 we find that 67 (65 percent) were given in adoption. As striking as this figure may seem, the rate of adoption was apparently even higher in Hsiachichou in the past. Of 45 girls who were born before 1910 a total of 32 (71 percent) were given out in adoption.[1]

*597 *593 *562 556 According to our informants in Hsiachichou, landlord families living in the market towns almost never gave their female children away in adoption. They were wealthy enough that the expense of raising a girl was not a matter of concern, and so were able to spare their [583] female children the often unhappy fate of the adopted daughter. Some parents who were particularly fond of a daughter even went so far as to arrange a matrilocal marriage as a means of keeping her in the family. By contrast with these exceptionally well to do families, there have always been some poor families living in the area who have had to sell all of their daughters. These were the really impoverished who could not afford to raise their sons let alone their daughters. The contrast is one to which a friend living in Hsulin often referred to illustrate

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[1] These figures and those which follow exclude the female children of a number of women who were prostitutes. Since the circumstances are so different from the case of the normal family, we will analyze these decisions separately.

*597 what he considered the inordinate importance of material wealth in
*593 Chinese society. "Whether or not a girl is going to become an adopted
*562 daughter," he would argue, "depends entirely upon whether she is born
556 into a rich family or a poor family. If her father is a landlord who eats his rice out of the middle of the pan, then there is no chance of her being given away in adoption; but if her family is poor and eats nothing but sweet potatoes, then she will almost certainly end up as an adopted daughter. A person's fate here depends entirely on how much money he has. As people say, 'Even the ghosts move stones for the wealthy.'"

As applied to a female child's chances of being given out in adoption, this argument contains a good deal of truth. Very wealthy families seldom give their female children in adoption, and the very poor usually had no choice but to give away their female children. On the other hand, the illustration is also exaggerated, for the fate of most female children was not a simple function of the income of their natal families. This was true only for those girls born to the very wealthy or the very poor. In a community such as Hsiachichou the wealthiest family was poor as compared with the landlords living in the market town, and only a few families were so impoverished as to have
*597 to sell their male children. Here a family's decision about raising
*562 a female child depended more upon their uses for the girl than upon
182 their financial ability. The wealthiest family in the village was not so affluent as to be able to raise several daughters if they did not have need for them, and few families were so poor as to have to give

*597 *562 182 away a child if they did have a use for her. Of 10 girls born into families who were clearly among the wealthiest in Hsiachichou in the years before 1930 we find that 6 were given away in adoption, and of 18 girls born into families who were definitely poor at that time 5 were raised as members of their natal families. Most families with female children kept at least one of their girls, and almost all families with more than one female child gave at least one girl away in adoption. Of 57 women who bore at least one female child 39 (68 percent) raised at least one of these chiliren, and of 30 mothers who bore two or more female children 28 (93 percent) gave away at least one of these children.

*597 *583 *562 591 182 As we have already seen in an earlier chapter, a family can achieve the goal of social continuity in several ways. They can arrange one of the two forms of patrilocal marriage for a son or an adopted son or they can arrange a matrilocal marriage for a daughter or an adopted daughter. A patrilocal marriage is always preferred over a matrilocal marriage when a family has a choice, but when they have no sons most families will gladly arrange a matrilocal match for a daughter. The perpetuation of the family is the goal, the forms of marriage only the means. We therefore find that one of the considerations which often enters into a family's decision about giving away a female child is their estimate of the possibility that the family may need to resort to a matrilocal marriage. If a family sees some possibility of this, they will usually be reluctant to give away their female children; while if they see little possibility of needing to resort to such a marriage,

*597 they will be much more inclined to save themselves the expense of
*562 raising their female children. One villager made the point very bluntly,
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591 saying, "A daughter is only of use to you if you need her to bring a
182 man into the family. Otherwise, she is just something you lose money
on and you might as well give her away."

*597 A second consideration which often enters into these decisions
*562 concerns the family's need for female labor. Hokkien women do not
462 ordinarily work in the fields as do their Hakka neighbors, and until
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very recently there was little opportunity for a woman to find any kind of wage employment. On the other hand, there is a great deal of work which must be done by women. They make and mend most of the family's clothing; they preserve and store various kinds of vegetables; it is usually the women in the family who prepare pig slop and look after the family's ducks and geese; they often have as many as five or six children to care for; and on top of all of this there is the huge task of cooking
*597 for a large family on a handsome but primitive stove. Some of this
857 work is too heavy or demands too much skill for a child, but there is
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182 a great deal of it with which a child can be very helpful. As soon as
she is eight or nine years old a girl can begin to help her mother with the cooking and house cleaning, and as early as five or six years a girl may be set the task of looking after her younger siblings. It is not at all uncommon in Hsiachichou to see a girl of six years carrying her two or three year old brother for whom she is given total responsi-
*597 bility for the greater part of the day. The value of a female child
*562 for these purposes naturally depends upon the amount of work to be done
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*597 and the number of people available to do it. A family with a number of
*562 daughters does not need and often cannot afford to keep still another
182 female child, and will therefore usually give the child away in adoption. A family with no female children, on the other hand, may need the services of a daughter and decide to keep the girl even though reluctant "to raise a child for someone else." The crucial factor in all decisions about adoption is the needs of the family at the time of the decision, and the extent to which the child may be able to fulfilll these needs.

*597 If these arguments are right, the likelihood of any particular
*592 child's being given away in adoption should be a function of the com-
*562 position of the family into which she is born. A girl who is born into
182 a childless family should almost always be retained as a member of her parents' _kê_. She would be of potential value to them as a means of bringing a son-in-law into the family, and she would also be valued for her ability to help with household chores. The girl who is born into a family with only male children should also be an unlikely candidate for adoption although her chances of remaining in her natal family should be somewhat lower than in the case of a girl born into a childless family. She would be valued for her labor, but there would be no need to keep her as insurance against the possibility of the family's not having sons. If we are right in arguing that female children are valued primarily for their labor and as a means of acquiring a son-in-law, the most likely candidates for adoption should be those girls who are born into families with female children or both male and female

*597 children. Such a family would not need another girl as insurance, nor
*592 would they be likely to want to retain a second girl for her labor.
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182 Our general hypothesis is that the composition of the family determines the value of a female child, and that it is primarily in terms of her value to the family that a girl's status is decided.

Considering the complexity of the phenomena with which we are dealing, we regard the following test of this hypothesis as strong support for our line of argument. Of 18 girls who were born to childless families before 1930 only 4 (22 percent) were given away in adoption, and of 13 girls born to families with male children but no female children only 4 (31 percent) were given in adoption. As compared with these relatively low rates of adoption among girls born to childless families and families with only male children, we find an extraordinarily high rate of adoption among those girls born into families with female children or both male and female children. Of 46 girls born to families of this type a total of 37 (81 percent) were given in adoption. Perhaps we have here one of the reasons why Hokkien women are so much more likely to attribute the character of their lives to fate than are Hokkien men. By contrast with the man whose life is not determined by anything so simple as his sibling order, a woman's life is largely a product of the composition of the family into which she is born.

These results would seem to indicate that decisions about female adoption were both rational and impersonal. A family decided in favor of keeping a child if they judged that they might need her as a means of bringing a son-in-law into the family, or if they had no other female

182 children and thought they could use her help with household chores. If
*597 they could see that they would not have to resort to a matrilocal
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*562 marriage, and if they also had as much female labor as they could use
and afford, they decided to give the child away as a means of conserving
family resources. Personal attachment and other particularistic considerations
apparently played little part in these decisions. This
was probably due at least in part to the fact that it was the child's
grandparents rather than her parents who made the decisions. They were
naturally not as personally involved with the child as her own parents
and were able to make the decision which was most consistent with the
family's needs and goals. A second and probably more important reason
was the press of circumstances and the tremendous importance of genealogical
[735] continuity. A family could not afford to give away a female child
if they had no sons because they could not risk dying without descendants,
and yet most families were so poor that they could not afford to
keep a child who did not have any real value to the family. A family
was so constrained by their goals and by their limited means that they
must of necessity think of female children as counters of varying value.
The head of a family might feel that girls were something to lose money
on and prefer to give them away in adoption, but if he did not have
any other grandchildren he could not risk such a decision. On the other
hand, a parent might become very attached to a second or third born
daughter and want to keep her, but if he already had several children
he could not afford to do so without straining the family's finances.
There was little room for personal or idiosyncratic considerations, and

*597 *592 *562 182 the conditions of the decision were so clear as to make mistaken judgements unlikely.

One might assume that a mother would be particularly reluctant to give away her first born child and a grandparent his first born grandchild, and yet even first born daughters were given away if they did not have value in terms of the family's larger needs. For reasons which we will dicuss later, many women in Hsiachichou adopted a daughter during the early years of marriage, and when they did they were just as likely to give away the first child born to them as they were the second. We find six cases in which a first born child is a girl who was born into a family with an adopted daughter, and in only one case do we find that the family did not give the child out as an adopted daughter. The fact that a female child might have had a special emotional significance as a first born child did not save her from being given in adoption if she did not have value to the family as domestic labor or as a means of bringing a son-in-law into the family. The general goals of the *ke* apparently always took precedence over the personal concerns of any of its members.

*597 *562 556 182 We have seen above that the likelihood of a female child's being given in adoption was not primarily a function of her family's financial ability, suggesting that this was a result of the relatively little variation in the income of village families. The wealthiest families in the village could not be unconcerned about raising a child for whom they had no use, and all but the very poorest families could manage to raise a daughter if she was needed. Nonetheless, there was some

656 *599 *562 182 some variation in the financial capacities of village families, and such variation as did exist accounts for the fact that a few families gave away an only daughter while a few kept more than one daughter. Seven of those 9 families who kept more than one female child seem to have been among the wealthiest families in the village at that time, and such information as we have seems to indicate that all but one of the eight families who gave away an only daughter were among the poorest families in the village. We know that in two cases the head of the family had been unemployed for some time when the girl was born, and in another case the family was so poor that they later had to sell one of their male children. It is also interesting to note that 8 of those 9 families who kept more than one daughter also gave away at least one of their later born female children. While they may have been somewhat better off than most of their neighbors, they were not so affluent as to be able to raise all their female children.

*599 *562 *593 The decision of eight families to give away an only female child was probably also influenced by the position of these children in their generation of the family. We know the sibling order of the fathers of six of these eight children, and in five of these six cases the father was a later born son. It therefore seems likely that these children were given away because the grandparents did not see any point in keeping so many granddaughters. Their older son's daughters provided the family with all the female labor needed, and from the grandparent's point of view the older son's children assured the continuity of the family line. There is also one other kind of consideration which may have influenced the decisions of several families who opted to keep mi

*597 more than one of their female children. We know that in three of these
*562 nine cases several children in the family had died shortly before the
*593 second daughter was born. Since families in which children have recently died often see the birth of their next child as a sign of a change in their fortunes, it is possible that these three girls were kept because of their significance in terms of the family's previous losses. At least this was suggested to us by the mother of one of these girls who told us that her family had decided not to give away the second girl "because we had been having such bad luck with our children. Three of them died before she was born, and we were so glad that she didn't die that we couldn't give her away."

*597 As we have already mentioned in describing the various forms of
594 marriage and adoption in Hsiachichou, the *sīm-pûà* form of adoption is generally viewed as more prestigeful than the *lông-lù* form of adoption. Several village women said that they didn't like the idea of giving a child away as a *lông-lù* "because people would talk about it." The compensating advantage of a *lông-lù* adoption is that the bride price is
[435] usually somewhat larger than in the case of a *sīm-pûà* adoption. The bride price for a *sīm-pûà* is a nominal seventy or eighty dollars, but a family can often ask as much as five or six hundred dollars for a *lông-lù*. We might therefore expect to find some relationship between a family's income and the likelihood of their giving out their daughters as *lông-lù*
*597 or *sīm-pûà*. Having money and the status which money creates, wealthy
556 families should be less concerned about the size of the bride price and more concerned about face. As a result, they should be more likely to

*597 556 give their daughters out as sĩm-pũà. The villagers themselves assume that such a correlation exists, but the limited data that we have do not seem to corroborate their assumption. The few cases for which we have all of the necessary information include several families who gave one daughter out as a sĩm-pũà and sold another as a lông-lù. The choice between the two forms of adoption does not seem to have been a very significant one for these families, and so perhaps here again relative wealth is only an important factor when one compares the very wealthy and the very poor.

*597 *562 *121 We are thus able to draw a relatively simple picture of decisions concerning adoption in the years before 1930. Whether or not any particular child was given away in adoption depended primarily upon the child's sex and the composition of the family in which he was born. The prime concern of any family in making decisions about their membership was to have descendants who could care for the adult members of the family in their old age and provide for the continuation of the family into the next generation. A child who was born into an as yet childless family was thus almost never given away in adoption. Of 18 males and 14 females born into childless families only 1 (5 percent) of the males and 4 (22 percent) of the females were given out in adoption. [735] But while every family was very much concerned to have heirs and descendants, all but a very few families were so poor that they [611] [582] [842] could not easily afford to raise all of their offspring. The general preference for patrilineal descent and patrilocal marriage also created among all families a tendency to value their male children much more than their female children.

*597 *562 *121 their female children. A first born daughter in a childless family was of value because she might be needed to substitute for a male, but when there were male children a daughter's value in her natal home was very much qualified. We therefore find that while very few later born males were given away in adoption, the great majority of later born female children were given away in adoption. Of 79 later born male children only 7 (9 percent) were given away, as compared with 41 (70 percent) of 59 later born female children. The only important exceptions were those female children born into families with male children but no female children. Although such girls were not valued for their potential of bringing a son-in-law into the family, they were often needed to help with household chores and child care with the result that they were not given in adoption as frequently as other later born females.

When asked why they gave female children in adoption villagers will occasionally mention what seems to be impractical and sometimes personal considerations. One woman told us that she gave away one of her girls "because she was such a difficult child," and another woman said that she had given away two of her daughters "because everyone was teasing [777] me for running a girl's club." There were also several villagers who told us that they had given away a female child because the girl "was sick all the time and must have had a sīm-pûà mīa:" it being a common belief that a child with an "adopted daughter fate" will become ill if her fortune is not recognized. But while these and other such reasons are mentioned, one is much more impressed by the pragmatic way in which

599 most villagers account for their motives. The most common reasons given
562 for deciding to give a daughter in adoption are just those reasons which
121 we have already described in our analysis. When asked why she gave away all but one of her four daughters, a village mother answered, "Why should I want all of those daughters? I exchanged them for two adopted daughters. Your own daughters are of no use if you have sons." Another informant told us that she had given away all of her later born daughters as a means of saving the family the expense of feeding them. "Why should I want so many daughters? It is useless to raise your own daughters. We'd just have to give them away when they grew up, and so when someone asked for them we gave them away. Think of all the rice we saved." While we hope the reader will have found something new in our analyses, it must be admitted that to the people of Hsiachichou there is nothing here which is not obvious and commonplace.

CHAPTER 8

DECISIONS BY PARENTS

#597 855 The popular image of the adopted daughter in Taiwan is not unlike that of the stepchild so familiar to readers of European children's literature of the last century. The adopted daughter is invariably represented in folk songs and folk tales as the most miserable of human creatures, rejected by her parents, mistreated by her foster parents, an object of pity for the kind and scorn for the cruel. The situation of the *sīm-pûà* has, in fact, become symbolic of the innocent bitter victim of fate. To complain of your lot when you feel there is no recourse one need only say, "What a *sīm-pûà* am I!", and to convey an impression of a person who is both dejected and resentful it is enough to note that he has "a *sīm-pûà* face." So vivid is this image in the popular imagination that even small children are only too well aware of what it means to be an adopted daughter. A crying child never mistakes her mother's meaning when she tells her "to stop acting like a *sīm-pûà*", and even the most recalcitrant child bends to parental will when threatened with the prospect of adoption. As one of the most popular of Taiwanese proverbs has it, "It is better to be a poor man's daughter than a rich man's adopted daughter."

Partially at least, this image of the adopted daughter is a popular stereotype, a representation which earns its way in the language and literature by its metaphorical value. Nonetheless, there is more

*597 855 than a modicum of truth in the picture, at least in so far as the village of Hsiachichou is concerned. Regardless of the form of adoption, an adopted daughter must work harder and longer than her foster parents' own female children; she is much less likely to be given an opportunity to attend school regularly; and when there is tension in the family it is the adopted daughter who is most likely to become the scapegoat. As one of our informants expressed it, "No matter what it is, an adopted daughter is always lower." There are, of course, exceptions. If the foster parents have no children of their own they are more likely to treat an adopted daughter much as they might treat a daughter, and occasionally even a girl adopted by a family with children can win her parents' affection. One girl who was adopted in the hope that "she would lead a boy into the family" told us that when her mother did bear a son within the year "she was so happy that she treated me just like a boy." But while such fortunate exceptions do occur, they are rare. We were told by a number of women who had been adopted daughters that the experience had taught them "to be careful" and "to watch other people's faces." While it would be too much to say that the following account is typical of the life of an adopted daughter, similar accounts from other women indicate that it is not exceptional.

> "When I was adopted my foster mother had to take a milk child to make money, and so I could only have the milk that was left over. There naturally wasn't enough and so I had to drink powdered milk and water off the rice. My foster sister tells me that the neighbors used to call her the fourteen year old mother because she was just like my mother. You know that when a baby doesn't get enough to eat it cries all the time. My foster mother would get angry when I cried, and just throw me on the bed. Then my sister

> *597 855 would run and pick me up and heat some milk to feed me. Everyone says that she was very good to me. She was just like a mother, and she is still very fond of me. When she tells me about those days she still cries about it, and then I cry too. My foster mother was always beating me. It wasn't that she didn't like me; it was just her temper. She would beat me whenever she was angry. Sometimes I would just be sitting there doing my homework, and she would grab me and beat me for no reason at all that I knew of. I had to be very careful. Sometimes I would run away bleeding and still she would chase me and beat me some more. When my sister got married and had a baby I would run home from school right away and carry the child because I knew that I wouldn't be as likely to get beaten with the baby on my back. Because I liked to study so much I got my sister to enroll me in school. Oh, how I got beaten for that! When I needed money for school, I always asked my sister to give it to me, not my mother. I didn't dare ask her. And when I got home from school I always had to work. I can still remember looking out the window at other children playing when I was working. Sometimes when my foster mother left the house I would run out and play. Naturally I would forget how long I was there, and then I would really get punished. Really, my foster mother beat me too often and too hard. I was always shaking with fear. My husband married into our family, and we moved next door, but my mother would still come over there and beat me. Whenever I think of my childhood I wonder why it was that my mía was so bad."

*597 626 Needless to say, such treatment of adopted daughters is not generally approved. Foster parents who beat their adopted daughters are often criticized for "beating other people's children," and if the treatment of the child is excessively cruel the family's neighbors may [558] interfere on behalf of the child. This happened in Hsiachichou in the case of an elderly woman who made a practice of confining her adopted daughter under a bamboo chicken coop and then walking around and around the coop with a bundle of burning paper. But while public opinion does exist and does to some extent serve to protect adopted daughters, it is really only effective in curbing the worst kinds of abuses. Many

#597 village foster parents claim that they have to treat their adopted
626 daughters better than their own children to avoid criticism, but in their franker moments mostof the villagers admit this is not the case. After several village mothers told us that they were afraid to punish their adopted daughters as severely as they punished their own children, we innocently asked one of our more reliable informants if this were generally true. She answered, "You walk around here all day talking to people. Can't you see? Haven't you heard people say that it is better to be a poor man's daughter than a rich man's adopted daughter?"

#597 As one might expect, this situation causes no little concern to
#562 the parent who is thinking of giving a child away in adoption. Although they are always more interested in their male children than in their female children, village parents are nonethless fond of their daughters, and the expectation that a child will be mistreated by her foster parents naturally makes them reluctant to give her away in adoption. After recounting her own unhappy childhood as an adopted daughter, one village mother told us that she "would rather starve than give one of my girls away in adoption," and another informant confided the thought that it might be better to drown a female child than to commit her to a life as a _sīm-pūà_. We also know of several cases in recent years in which parents who had considered giving a girl in adoption did not do so for fear that the child would be mistreated by her foster parents. For example, early in our stay in Hsiachichou we heard of a village family which was planning to give one of their daughters to a neighbor who was also a distant relative, but when we later inquired

*597 as to the details of the adoption we were told that the family had
*562 changed their mind "because they were afraid of what might happen to the girl." As the child's mother herself explained, "We were worried that we might give her to someone who didn't like children, and then we would have to ask them to give her back. That would make everyone talk about us and say that we weren't good relatives. But what else could we do if they didn't like her? We couldn't just stand by and watch them beat her."

Although this particular case is of recent occurrence, village parents have probably always experienced similar misgivings when faced with the prospect of giving a child in adoption. It is obvious from the data reported in the last chapter, however, that in the years before 1930 such parental concern did not significantly influence decisions about female adoption. With very few exceptions girls were given away if the family already had female children and retained only if the family did not as yet have any daughters, a pattern of adoption which was clearly a product of decisions made in terms of the child's utility rather than a concern for the child's welfare. But why should this be the case? If we are right in arguing that many parents were concerned with their children's fate as adopted daughters, why did these concerns have so little influence on the family's decisions? Although it is difficult to identify the crucial factor among the infinity of conditions present, it would seem that there were two conditions which were primarily responsible for the situation.

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In the first place, as we have already suggested earlier, most families living in Hsiachichou at this time were so poor that they could not afford to be unconcerned about the costs of raising a female child, for this expense might make it difficult for them to realize other and more important goals. A family had to think first of providing for their heirs and descendants, their sons and grandsons, and this often meant adopting girls to raise as their wives, a role which a family's own daughters could not fulfill. Except in the case in which a family did not have male children, it was a luxury for them to raise a daughter "for someone else," and most families could not afford luxuries. Secondly, there was the fact that those persons who would naturally feel most strongly about the welfare of the children, their parents, were not in a position of authority with regard to decisions concerning adoption. In the years before 1930 the authority for making such decisions rested with the head of the family, and in the course of the typical family cycle the head of a child's family was usually her grandparents rather than her own parents. While they were undoubtedly not entirely unconcerned about the welfare of their female grandchildren, most grandparents were probably not as concerned as the child's own parents. More importantly perhaps, their age and experience, as well as their position of responsibility, gave the grandparents a different perspective. The parents of a child were likely to look at the decision concerning her adoption in terms of the child's welfare and their personal concern; the grandparents were likely to look at the decision from the point of view of the family's

*590 ultimategoals and overall responsibilities. The result was that most
*592 female children were given out in adoption despite the fact that this
178 committed them to an unhappy life. Whatever fears a child's parents may have had about her fate as an adopted daughter could not save her because they were not the decision makers, and even if they had been it is doubtful that they could have done other than give the child away. Most families were so constrained by their limited means and their goals that there was little room for concern about the child's personal welfare.

*597 In the years since 1930 this situation has changed considerably.
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178 For one thing, the poverty which forced many families to give away their female children as a means of conserving their resources has been
[427] greatly alleviated. Most of the villagers of forty and fifty years
[463] ago earned a living as tenant farmers, but the post-war population of the village has included a number of skilled workers, several families with fairly large land holdings, several school teachers and petty officials, and a dozen or more families who own small and fairly prosperous businesses. Even those who still earn a living on small land holdings and as laborers are now earning more and living somewhat more comfortably than did their fathers and grandfathers. The general improvement in conditions in Hsiachichou is apparent in an improved diet, the widespread use of bicycles and radios, and most
[342] strikingly in the construction of village houses. The thatch roofs
[333] and wattled walls of the early decades of the century have been almost entirely replaced by tile and kiln brick. Of 49 houses in Hsiachichou

*597 in 1960 only 8 had one or more mud walls, and none of the 49 were
511 roofed with thatch. The average family is still not so well-to-do
178 that they can afford to raise many daughters, and a daughter is still
[842] [335] generally regarded as "something to lose money on." The difference
is that now many families can afford the luxury of losing money on one
or two of their daughters without sacrificing other values.

*597 An equally important change has also taken place in the authority
592 structure of the kê. Although the senior generations of the family
*593 still usually occupy the position of kā-tìu:, they have lost much of
178 their authority over decisions concerning adoption. These decisions are now most often made by the child's own parents. As in the case of marriage, the senior members of the family still exert a considerable influence, and in a few cases the younger members of the family may leave a decision up to their parents. But while the grandparents are thus often able to negotiate the decisions they prefer, they are no longer able to dictate the disposition of their grandchildren. A woman who is now in her forties told us that when she was married her mother-in-law told her that she could only keep one of her daughters, and that she would have to give the rest in adoption. This could not happen today. A persuasive mother-in-law with firm control of her son might succeed in getting a daughter-in-law to give away several of her female children, but a strong willed daughter-in-law could probably manage to keep all of them if she so desired. As one of the older men complained to us, "Young people now won't listen to their parents. They do what they want to do. You can't tell them to do this or that.

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They'll do it if they want to, but if they don't want to they won't."

*597 *562 178 The inevitable result has been a sharp decline in the rate of female adoption. As we have seen in the last chapter, a total of 67 (65 percent) of those 103 girls born in Hsiachichou before 1930 were given away in adoption. By comparison, we find that only 43 (26 percent) of 163 girls born after 1930 were given out in adoption, a drop in the overall rate of adoption of nearly forty percent. By way of qualification, it is important to note that this decline was not entirely due to more favorable economic conditions and changes in family structure. For reasons which we will discuss later, the decline in the number of adoptions has been accompanied by a lessening demand for adopted daughters. As a result, there have been some families who would have liked to give away a daughter but who have not been able to find anyone interested in adopting a child. We knew of at least two women in Hsiachichou in 1960 who said that they wanted to give away one of their daughters if they could find someone who wanted them, and there were probably others who would have happily relinquished a daughter had they been presented with the opportunity. Just how many more girls would have been given away during the last thirty years had it not been for the decrease in demand is difficult to say, but it is our impression that it would not have been more than five or ten percent. While we heard of several families who would have given away a daughter if they could have found a family to adopt her, we know of many cases of families who were asked for one of their daughters and refused.

*597 *562 *592 858 178 182 The past thirty years in Hisachichou have thus seen a sharp decline in the rate of female adoption. Partially this is due to a decreased demand for adopted daughters, but primarily it is a result of changes in the economy and the structure of the *kê*. But is this the limit of the effect of these changes upon decisions concerning female adoption? We have seen in the last chapter that in the pre-1930 period the likelihood of a female child's being given in adoption was a function of her utility to her natal family. Those girls born into families who might need them to bring a son-in-law into the family or for their labor were retained, and those born into families with sons of their own and adequate domestic labor were given out in adoption. Do these same considerations enter into decisions about adoptions in the years after 1930? The question is an interesting one because of the very fact that the authority for these decisions has shifted from the older to the younger generations of the family. In asking whether or not the same considerations are relevant in the two cases we are asking whether or not the younger and the older generations of the family share the same values with regard to the nature and purpose of the family.

Despite the generally impoverished conditions of most families in Hsiachichou prior to 1930, very few families ever chose to give away in adoption a girl who was born before they had any other children. With no sons as yet the family had to face the possibility that they might not have male heirs, and so they chose to keep their daughter as a possible means of bringing a son-in-law into the family. Of 18

*597 girls born into childless families only 4 (22 percent) were given out
*562 in adoption, and in at least 3 of these 4 cases the family was so
*592 poor as to be unable to afford such insurance. This same tendency is
858 also found in the case of those decisions made after 1930. Of 35
178 female children born into childless families during this later period
182 only 2 (6 percent) were given out in adoption, and in one of these cases the child's parents did not have any choice in the matter. Adopted by a village family as a *sīm-pûa*, the child's mother objected to marrying her foster brother, and was then allowed to marry out of her foster family on the condition that she give them her first born child in adoption.

In the years before 1930 the rate of adoption among those girls born into families with male but no female children was also relatively low, although somewhat higher than among those girls born into childless families. While not needed as a potential means of bringing a son-in-law into the family, girls born into families with no other daughters were valued for their labor, and hence were not commonly given out in adoption. Of 13 girls born into families with at least one son but no daughter only 4 (31 percent) were given away, and in several of these cases the child would probably have not been given away if it had not been that her grandparents already had other granddaughters. Again we find the same tendency for those decisions made after 1930. Of 17 girls born into families with sons but no daughters only 3 (18 percent) were given away, a rate of adoption which is higher than that found among girls born into childless families but still somewhat

#597 lower than the overall rate for girls born after 1930. It is interest-
#592 ing to note that in two of those three cases in which a family re-
#562 858 claimed a daughter given away in adoption the girl was an only daughter
178 of a family with several male children. These families apparently did
182 value their only daughter to some extent even though they had given
her away in adoption, and when offered the opportunity they were not
too reluctant to take the child back.

The highest rate of adoption in the pre-1930 period was among those girls born into families with female children or both male and female children. These families already had all the female labor they could afford as well as the means of perpetuating their lines, and so they gave away their later born daughters to save the expense of raising them. Of the 47 girls born into such families 37 (81 percent) were given out in adoption, a rate substantially higher than that for girls born into families without female children. The same is true of those decisions made after 1930. Although the absolute rate of adoption among girls born into families with female children or both male and female children is much lower than in the pre-1930 period, it is much higher than among those girls born into families with no female children in the post-1930 period. Whereas only 5 (10 percent) of those 52 girls born into families without female children were given out in adoption, a total of 32 (31 percent) of those 103 girls born into families with female children were given in adoption.

We thus find much the same pattern of adoption in the years since 1930 as in the years prior to 1930, a correspondence which suggests

*597 that all of these decisions were made in much the same terms. It
*592 would therefore seem that there is a close agreement among the
*562 generations of the family with regard to certain values concerning the
858 goals of the family. Having more resources available to them and being
178 more concerned about the personal welfare of their children, parents
182 gave away fewer of their female offspring than did the grandparents when they held primary responsibility for these decisions. When circumstances did force the parents to give away one of their children, however, they generally made their decisions as to which child in much the same terms as had the grandparents. They gave away those girls who had little value as labor or as a potential means of bringing a son-in-law into the family, and they retained those girls who could be useful as domestic labor and who might be needed as a means of insuring continuity in the family line. Although we shall see later that the shift in authority from the older to the younger generations of the family has affected some decisions about marriage and adoption, it apparently did not alter the kinds of considerations which go into a decision about female adoption.

Another comparison between the adoption patterns of the two periods adds further weight to this argument. In the years before 1930 families almost always gave away girls born after a female but before a male as well as those girls born after the family had both a son and a daughter. Of those 13 girls born into families with at least one daughter but no sons 11 (85 percent) were given away in adoption, and of 33 girls born into families with both sons and daughters

*597 *592 *562 858 178 182

26 (79 percent) were given in adoption. This is what one would expect if most families were so poor that they could not afford to raise their female children. When a family which did not have any sons as yet produced a daughter they would keep her as insurance against the possibility of not bearing sons, but they would tend to give away all of their later born girls whether or not they had borne a son in the meantime. They simply could not afford to keep two female children as insurance. If a family was not so pressed by their limited financial means, however, we might expect to find a very different attitude towards raising a second daughter when they had no sons. Until a family actually bore a male child who could act as an heir and descendant, they might very well want to keep more than one daughter as a potential means of bringing a man into the family. Just as it is considered wise to have more than one son "because you can't tell how one of them might treat you," it is also wise to have more than one daughter in case one of them rebels against the prospect of a matrilocal marriage. We might therefore expect to find a very different rate of adoption among girls born into families with daughters but no sons in the years after 1930. Living in a generally more favorable economy, most families could afford more insurance, and so we might expect them to keep all of their daughters until they actually produced a son, giving away their girls only if they were assured of continuity through a male heir. This is just what we do find. After 1930 girls born into families with a daughter but no sons were retained as members of the family nearly as often as those girls born into

*597 *592 *562 856 178 182 childless families. Of 35 girls born into childless families 2 (6 percent) were given away in adoption, and of 25 girls born into families with at least one daughter but no sons 3 (12 percent) were given away in adoption. The only relatively high rate of adoption in these later years is among those girls born into families with both male and female children. Of 78 girls born into such families 29 (37 percent) were given away in adoption. While the younger generations who were in authority after 1930 were less inclined to give away their female children, they appreantly did take into account much the same kinds of considerations as had entered into the decisions of the senior generations before 1930.

The same point might be made in relation to decisions concerning male adoption. As in the years before 1930, male children are still very much in demand on Taiwan. [435] In 1960 we recorded a case in which a family living in the town of Hsulin paid NT$5000 for a male child, and we were told by informants in Hsiachichou that the more common price for a male child is somewhere between NT$6000 and NT$7000. Since this amount of money is equivalent to half a year's income for most village families, one might assume that if the basic value of male children had changed at least a few families would have sold one of their sons. The fact is, however, that now that most families are better off than they were in the earlier decades of this century, even fewer families sell a male child than in the years before 1930, and this despite the fact that most families have more sons than they did earlier. We know that 8 of the 118 boys born into the village before

*597 1930 were sold as bīeng-līeng-kià:, but we do not find a single case of
*562 the sale of a male child among those 144 boys born after 1930. The
*592 only cases of male adoption in Hsiachichou in the last thirty years
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178 have been the two cases already mentioned in which a boy was trans-
182 ferred by his grandparents from one brother to another. Whatever other changes have taken place in Hsiachichou in recent years, it is obvious that the desire for an unbroken chain of male descendants has remained.

*597 In the last chapter we saw that the likelihood of any particular
*562 girl's being given away as an adopted daughter was not to any large
556 degree a function of the wealth of her natal family. Most families
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in the village at that time were so poor that they could not reasonably undertake the responsibility of raising a female child if she was not needed, and only a few families were so poor that they could not reasonably undertake the responsibility of raising at least one female child if there was good reason for them to do so. The likelihood of a girl's being given in adoption was thus a function of her value to her natal family, and this was determined in large part by the composition of the family into which she was born. The general poverty of the village forced all families to seriously consider giving away their female children, but it did not make any one family more or less likely to give away their daughters than another family. In the language of the experiment, wealth was a constant. But this is not the case
[833] in more recent years. As the general economy of Hsiachichou has changed during the course of the last three or four decades, some families have benefited from these changes more than others. In the early

*597 decades of this century every family was more or less on a par. The
*562 only important difference between families was the amount of land
556 owned, and none of them owned very much. In 1960 some families were
178 still farmers with less than half an acre of land or coal miners
[463] earning only a few dollars a day, but others were working as techni-
[434] cians or petty bureaucrats or had managed to establish themselves in some kind of a business. As a result, we find that in recent years wealth has become an important factor in determining whether or not a family will decide to give away a child in adoption. Some families are still forced to give away many of their female children simply in order to raise their sons, while there are other families who can afford to raise their daughters without sacrificing other goals.

*597 Since our information concerning the relative income of the var-
*562 ious families living in Hsiachichou is not so detailed as to permit
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621 a direct comparison of individual families at different points in time,
178 the extent of these changes can best be illustrated by comparing those two areas of the village known as Shangchou and Hsiachou, the former now containing more of the affluent citizens of Hsiachichou and the latter housing their less successful neighbors. The families originally living in Shangchou took advantage of the opportunities offered by the changing economy early, giving them an initial advantage over their neighbors in Hsiachou. More importantly, most of the better building sites in the village are located in Shangchou and those families who have improved their lot in recent years to the point that they could afford to build a new house have built it in Shangchou, leaving their

*597 less fortunate neighbors as residents of the decaying Hsiachou. This
*562 imbalance of wealth between the two areas is reflected in the adoption
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556 rates. Of the 93 girls born into Hsiachou 32 (34 percent) were given
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out in adoption as compared with only 9 (14 percent) of the 66 girls born into Shangchou. Were our information detailed enough to permit a comparison of individual families, we would undoubtedly find that relative wealth is an even more important variable, but gross as it is, even this comparison clearly makes the point that her family's ability to raise her has become an important determinant of a girl's chance of remaining in her natal home.

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*562 We must therefore take into account two sets of factors rather than one in order to calculate the likelihood of a girl's being given in
*592 adoption in the post-1930 period. We must consider the composition of
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556 the family into which she was born, and we must also take into account
621 the relative economic status of her natal family. When both sets of factors are considered a clear pattern of adoption emerges, with girls born into some situations being much more likely to become adopted daughters than girls born under other circumstances. The daughters of wealthy families who are born before the family has either sons or daughters are almost never given in adoption, and those born into families with both male and female children are only occasionally given in adoption. Of 39 girls born in Shangchou to families of the first type only 2 (5 percent) were given in adoption, and of 24 girls born into Shangchou families of the second type only 5 (21 percent) were given in adoption. The composition of the family into which a girl

*597 is born is thus not an important variable among wealthy families, most
*592 of the families in Shangchou deciding to keep their female offspring
*562 178 regardless of the number and sex of their other children. In the case
556 of the poorer village families living in Hsiachou, on the other hand,
621 the composition of the family into which a girl is born does make a difference, the rate of adoption for girls born into some types of families being almost as high as in the years before 1930. We find that girls who are born into families which have both sons and daughters are much more likely to be given out in adoption than those born into childless families or families which have only sons or only daughters. Whereas only 6 (15 percent) of the 39 girls born into Hsiachou families who did not as yet have either male or female children were given in adoption, we find that 26 (48 percent) of those 54 girls born into families with both sons and daughters were given in adoption.

*597 We are now in a position to answer some of the questions raised
*562 at the beginning of our last chapter. Whether or not a family living
*592 in Hsiachichou decides to give away one of their children depends
182 primarily upon the child's value in terms of the family's economic and social needs. Males are less likely to be given away than females because of their importance as heirs and descendants, and girls born into childless families are less likely to be given away than those born into families with sons because of their potential utility to the family. The composition of the family is thus probably the most important single factor influencing decisions about adoption,

*597 *562 but there are also other factors which may make any given decision more
*592 or less likely. The generation which has the authority for making the
182 decisions in the family determines the fate of many children, and the
family's economic status determines the fate of a good many more.
[556] Children whose fates are decided by their parents are somewhat less
likely to be given away than those whose fates are determined by their
grandparents, and children born into poor families are somewhat more
likely to be given in adoption than those born into wealthy families.

CHAPTER 9

MARRIAGE BY ADOPTION

*584 591] The first decision the family of a new born male child must make is whether they are going to raise the child as a member of their own kê or give him in adoption; and, if they decide to retain him as a member, they must then make some decision about his marriage. Since very few families need consider seriously the possibility of giving a male child in adoption, it is usually the decision about the boy's marriage which is most pressing. As we shall see later, a number of men who were born into Hsiachichou made matrilocal marriages, but this is not a possibility ordinarily envisioned by a boy's parents when he is still a child. The assumption is always that every male not given in adoption will marry patrilocally and become an heir in his father's line of descent. Matrilocal marriages only occur as a result of unusual circumstances which cannot ordinarily be foreseen by a child's parents. Thus, the decision for a family with a male child is usually seen as involving a choice between the sīm-pûà form of marriage and the preferred patrilocal marriage. Should a female child be adopted and raised as the boy's wife, or should the family wait and obtain a bride for him in the preferred way? The question is a complex one which may have a crucial influence on the family's fortunes, and most families make their decision only after the most careful deliberations.

*593 Decisions about the sīn-pûa form of marriage are usually made by
581 the boy's parents or grandparents when the child himself is only two
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181 or three years of age. It is therefore important to note at the out-
set that it is their right and duty to make this decision in terms of
their own best interests and the best interests of the family. The
child's own interests may be set aside as a consideration of secondary
importance without any risk of social disapprobation or personal guilt.
A parent may sympathize with his son if his marriage turns out to be
a personally unhappy one, but he need not feel guilty because he
was responsible for the decision. It was simply not his responsibility
to consider the child's personal happiness in making a decision about
his marriage. Children exist for the sake of their parents and for the
sake of the family, not the family and the parents for the sake of
their children. Although the Christian and the Chinese peasant agree
that one of the primary functions of the family is to beget children,
[171] they base their conclusions on entirely different premises. The
Christian must be a father for the sake of the children; the Chinese
farmer must be a father because it his duty as a son. For the
Christian the greater obligation always rests with the parents, while
for the Chinese the greater obligation always rests with the children.
They must obey and respect their parents; work for their parents'
support and comfort; and eventually marry and provide descendants to
*593 insure their parents' security in the next world. So basic is this
766 attitude to the Chinese view of family life that should a child die
before his parents, his father may justly beat his coffin with a stick

4 593 766 to punish him for being so unfilial. As one of our informants in Hsiachichou explained,

> "When you have a child you want him to take care of you when you are old and bury you when you die, but it is just the opposite if you have to bury him. It is because you are mad at him for failing you that you beat him."

4 583 183 554 What, then, are the considerations which make a family more or less likely to adopt a sīm-pûà rather than marrying their son in the preferred way? Certainly one of the most important is that the preferred form of marriage is by definition the proper way for a man to marry. The sīm-pûà form of marriage is not disgraceful but neither is it as right, as natural, as the preferred form. The difference between the two is analogous to the difference between speaking a language with an accent and speaking without an accent. Both will do, but one is right. The very fact that it is the right form of marriage also makes the preferred marriage the more prestigious. It is favored for the same reason that a church wedding is preferred over a civil wedding in the United States. It is the socially correct way of marrying. Moreover, like a church wedding in the United States, it gives a family an opportunity for social display and conspicious consumption. Being able to pay a large bride price, receiving an ostentatious dowry, entertaining hundreds of friends and relatives, displaying to your neighbors and fellow villagers the extent of your social ties -- all of these give a family face. One might say that the preferred marriage is better than the sīm-pûà form of marriage for the same reason that a terazzo floor is better than a simple concrete floor.

583 As the villagers themselves often say, "It is better to look at."

Other things being equal, then, every family would choose the preferred form of marriage. Unfortunately for the people of Hsiachichou other things are seldom equal. There are considerations other than propriety and prestige which a family must take into account in choos-
583 ing between the two forms of marriage. As we shall see in the next
584 chapter, the advantages of the sīm-pûà marriage relevant to these other
178 considerations have been largely lost in the last three decades, but before 1930 these advantages were such that decisions in favor of the sīm-pûà marriage were almost as common as those in favor of the preferred form of marriage. Of 98 men who were born in Hsiachichou prior to 1930 at least 41 (42 percent) were paired with sīm-pûà, and it is likely that the number of decisions for this form of marriage were even higher than these figures indicate. [125] There were undoubtedly a number of such adoptions that we did not learn of because the girl died in infancy, and there were possibly other cases in which the child's parents demanded her return because of ill treatment -- a contingency that would make the boy's family reluctant to mention the fact of the adoption. We would probably be closer to the mark to say that half of those decisions made before 1930 were in favor of the sīm-pûà marriage.

583 When asked why they adopted a sīm-pûà for a son, villagers usually
584 begin by mentioning economic considerations. "We were so poor that
435 there was nothing else we could do," or "We had so many children that we couldn't afford marriages for all of them." The expenses of the

*583 preferred form of marriage are prohibitive. Whereas it costs no more
*584 than a token price of several hundred dollars to adopt a sīm-pûǹ,
435 it may cost a family the equivalent of a year's income to obtain a
bride in the preferred way. In the first place, there is the bride
price, the amount of which varies but which avemges around NT$8000.
Secondly, there is the cost of the marriage cakes which must be sent
to the girl's family for distribution to their friends and relatives.
The average cost of these is somewhere between NT$3000 and NT$4000,
although some families may have to expend as much as NT$6000 or even
[301] NT$7000. Thirdly, there is the expense of the jewelry which must be
presented to the birde on the occasion of the engagement, the minimum
requirement being a gold ring, gold earrings, and a gold bracelet.
Even when a family buys the lightest jewelry they can find, the cost
[585] is somewhere between NT$3000 and NT$4000. Most burdensome of all,
there is the expense of the various feasts associated with the wedding,
[584] all of which are the responsibility of the groom's family. At the very
least these cost a family NT$7000 or NT$8000, and a family which
"cares about face" may spend as much as NT$12,000 to NT$15,000. Beyond
these major expenditures, they are also innumerable smaller items.
[585] It may be necessary for a family to enlarge its house or at least re-
furnish a room; a gift of NT$800 to NT$1000 must be made to the go-
between for "bringing happiness;" taxis have to be hired for the groom's
relatives to fetch the bride on the day of the wedding: and there are
always sundry functionaries who must be given "red packets" to thank
*583 them for some service or favor. Fortunately for the beleaguered family
585 which undertakes such a marriage, these expenses are to some extent
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*583 offset by gifts received from friends and relatives at the time of
585 the wedding. Depending upon their degree of relationship, relatives
431 [604] usually give between NT$40 and NT$80, except for the groom's mother's
brother who must give at least NT$500; and friends and neighbors usually give NT$20 to NT$50, although good friends may give considerably more. But while these gifts are a welcome boon, they do not even meet the cost of the wedding feast which is approximately NT$80 per guest.
[434] Given then that the average family's gross income is somewhere between NT$15,000 and NT$20,000 one can understand why it is that many families are reluctant to undertake a preferred marriage for even one son, let alone two or three. The cost of even one such marriage may put a family into debt for years.

*583 There are, of course, various ways in which a family can econo-
*584 mize on the preferred form of marriage. They can bargain over the
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558 bride price until it is reduced to the bare minimum; they can buy
the lightest and least expensive jewelry available; the wedding feasts can be limited to the family's closest relatives; and such common elaborations as a band and taxicabs can be eliminated. The point is that if a family has to economize so drastically it is better for them to adopt a sîm-pûa than to even attempt the preferred marriage. For the same reason that a family can gain face by marrying a son in the preferred way, they can lose face by carrying out such a marriage in a manner that does not satisfy people's expectations. A sîm-pûa marriage does not enhance one's social position, but neither does it involve the risk of losing such prestige as the family may enjoy.

*583 *584 558 554 Moreover, the family which cannot really afford the expense of the preferred marriages takes the risk of not being able to find a daughter-in-law. Knowing that the prospective groom's family cannot afford a generous bride price and an elaborate wedding, many families will be unwilling to give their daughters in marriage. To be allied to such a family would reflect unfavorably upon their own social position. As we have mentioned earlier, a family will occasionally economize by holding the engagement and the wedding on the same day, but such marriages are not easily arranged and are certainly not common. In one instance in which such an arrangement occurred in Hsiachichou the bride was at least six months pregnant, so that her parents obviously had little to say about their choice of in-laws.

The preferred form of marriage is, then, the favored form of marriage. It gives the family who can afford such a marriage the satisfaction of having proceeded in the proper way, and it also has the advantage of enhancing their position in the eyes of the relatives and neighbors. In so far as the form of marriage itself is concerned the *sīm-pûà* marriage is clearly a second choice, but it does have the [556] compensation of being considerably less expensive. We should therefore expect wealthy families to choose the more prestigious preferred marriage for their sons, while poor families might be expected to choose the less ostentatious but cheaper *sīm-pûà* form of marriage. Unfortunately, we cannot test this hypothesis in the case of Hsiachichou. [129] We do not have the information to compare families of the pre-1930 period in terms of their relative incomes, and in the post-1930 period

*583 *584 559 558 128 only a very few sīm-pûà adoptions took place. These do all happen to be among the poorer families of the village, but the numbers are so small that there is no possibility of a reliable test of the relationship. Until such time as data is collected in other communities which are demonstrably richer or poorer than Hsiachichou forty years ago, we will have to be content with the villagers own statements that the relative cost of the two forms of marriage was one of the factors which they took into account in making their decisions.

*583 *584 556 One thing, however, is clear. Although it is likely that economic considerations played a large role in the choice between the two forms of marriage, these are by no means the only considerations which entered into the decision. The poor may have chosen the sīm-pûà marriage more often than the wealthy, but there were nonetheless many wealthy families which preferred this form of marriage. A family which was wealthy enough to build the first brick house in Hsiachichou adopted a sīm-pûà for one of their sons, and the three families with the largest land holdings in Hsiachichou in the pre-war period adopted sīm-pûà for three of their six sons. There would seem to be no question that these families could have afforded the more prestigious preferred form of marriage, and yet in some cases all chose the less prestigious sīm-pûà marriage. We also know of several cases of truly wealthy families living in the market town who adopted sīm-pûà for one or more of their sons. One of these families was the largest landowner in the area, and was obviously not deterred by the cost of the preferred form of marriage. Since one would expect the very wealthy to

*583 *584 586 be concerned about social approval and propriety, these decisions clearly involved other considerations.

606 *[583] One of these would seem to be the type of family created by the two different forms of marriage. Tension between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is characteristic of the preferred form of marriage from the very inception of the relationship. At the engagement when the mother-in-law attempts to push the engagement ring past her daughter-in-law's knuckle, the assumption of hostility between the two women is symbolically expressed, and this hostility tends to become more intense and more open as the relationship matures. During the early years of the marriage, when the mother-in-law is still an active woman, and before her daughter-in-law has secured her position in the family, the older woman will usually be the dominant member of the pair, a position which she seldom hesitates to exploit, taking advantage of every opportunity to harass and embarass her son's wife. A stranger in her husband's village as well as in his home, the untried and insecure bride has no choice but to swallow her resentment, but this early attitude of restraint does not last. The birth of her own children gives the young woman as much of a claim to a place in her husband's family as the mother-in-law herself, and in time the young woman also finds friends and confidantes among her husband's relatives and neighbors. Resentful of her mother-in-law's treatment of her, and often seeing the dissolution of the family as being to her advantage, the daughter-in-law then begins to respond to her mother-in-law's abuse in kind. The result is an active and

606 open conflict which threatens the harmony, and indeed the very existence of the extended family. Although obviously biased in favor of the speaker's point of view, the following excerpt from a village conversation indicates something of the intensity of the conflict between [761] the two women. The conversation refers to a recent death which a shaman interpreted as the result of a death bed curse.

> "You didn't know my mother-in-law, did you? My mother-in-law was terrible at cursing people. She used every kind of curse. But I was very good to her just the same. I took her food to her when it was time to eat no matter how far away from the house she was. So when she died my husband's father said to me, 'All right, she is dead now. It doesn't matter how much she cursed you. You were so good to her that from now on you will certainly have good fortune and live very well.' The mother-in-law of that woman who died could really curse people, and so I think that what the god said is right. That woman really didn't treat her mother-in-law at all well. Her mother-in-law was blind and bedridden, and she seldom went to look after her or feed her. She wasn't filial to her mother-in-law, and so naturally what her mother-in-law said came true. I think that if you are filial to your mother-in-law it doesn't matter how much she may curse you."

An occasional good-tempered daughter-in-law will ignore her mother-in-law's provocations, and not all mothers-in-law are sharp tongued and unreasonable curmudgeons. Exceptions do occur, but they are rare. Our field notes include references to bitter quarrels or complaints involving nearly every mother-in-law and daughter-in-law living in the village during the period of our study. So nearly universal is the tension between the two women that the villagers themselves regard a peaceful relationship as extraordinary. When one village woman let it be known that she thought that her new daughter-in-law was both considerate and hard-working the situation became a

606 matter of general village attention and the topic so widely discussed that references to it appear in our field notes again and again over a period of several months. At first the tone of the village response was that of knowing amusement, everyone confidently implying that it wouldn't last more than a few weeks. When the usual change of heart did not take place quite as soon as expected, this attitude gradually gave way to resentment and even irritation. A number of village women seemed to feel that the woman was causing them trouble by praising her daughter-in-law. As one of them put it to us, "She just goes around telling everyone how good her daughter-in-law is, and this just makes a lot of trouble. It makes other people mad at their own daughters-in-law just to hear it." The eventual deterioration of the relationship was greeted by the family's neighbors with satisfaction and a sense of relief. To the best of our knowledge, the only cordial relationship of the kind in the village involved an elderly woman and the wife of her younger son, the wife of the elder son being a woman with a village-wide reputation of being a "hot pepper". It seems from what the family's neighbors told us that the older woman had been forced to come to terms with her younger daughter-in-law in order to hold her position vis-à-vis her elder son's wife. While this may not be that rare exception which proves the rule, it does serve to underscore our more general point.

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*584 This tension between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is at least in part a product of the process by which the preferred form of marriage is arranged. It is usually the groom's mother who takes

606 *[584] primary responsibility for negotiating the details of the marriage, and she is the person who is most likely to become angry as a result of the inevitable haggling involved in these negotiations. Irritated by the size of the bride price she has had to pay and resentful over what she considers an inadequate dowry, she awaits her daughter-in-law's arrival "with an angry face." Given, then, a situation in which the mother-in-law must supervise her daughter-in-law's work, a situation very much exacerbated by the fact that the mother-in-law often has good reason to be dissatisfied with her daughter-in-law's performance, it is almost inevitable that tensions will develop between the two women. The girl is bound to make mistakes as a result of being unacquainted with the routine of the household, and often she has not been properly trained in much of the work expected of a married woman. One woman told us that she was so worried about this that she did not sleep or eat for three days before her marriage.

> "Nobody could have been more worried than I was before I got married. I never used to go out of the house, not even for a walk. Daughters don't learn to cook or to take care of a house. I was so worried that I couldn't eat or sleep for three or four days, and I was so tired the day of the wedding that I could hardly walk."

A sympathetic mother-in-law may remember her own experience as a bride, but more often than not this is only a distant memory given no relevance to the present situation. What is usually foremost in the older woman's mind is that with a daughter-in-law she will have someone to shoulder the burden of the household chores. A few minutes after describing her own anxiety as a bride, this same woman told us

606 that she was so happy her son was marrying soon "because now I will have somebody to help me cook and take care of this large family." She was naturally very much disappointed when her daughter-in-law turned out to be no better prepared than she herself had been, and as a result she was constantly complaining that her daughter-in-law was a "useless girl who doesn't know how to do anything but eat rice."

Listening to the daily bickering among the women of the household, one gets the impression that the tension between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is primarily a matter of conflict over household routine. The mother-in-law complains that her son's wife "doesn't know how to do anything," that "she is lazy and stupid," that "she doesn't know the worth of money," and so forth. For her part, the daughter-in-law accuses the older woman of "really being able to scold," of not giving her son "enough money to buy anything," and of being generally demanding and bad tempered. But while these daily encounters over matters of household management and the domestic division of labor do add to the tensions between the two women, they are more the topics of the conflict than the real cause of the tension. *593 The origins of the tension between the two women would seem rather to 606 be a competition for the loyalty of the young man who is the older 152 woman's son and the younger woman's husband. A woman proves herself as a woman and secures her position as a wife by bearing male children. It is through her sons and by means of her sons that a woman finds a place in life. Moreover, given the ideal of an expressionless and unemotional relationship between husband and wife, a woman's male

593 children are often the only appropriate objects for her affections. 606 It is not surprising then that she is jealous of the woman who enters 152 her son's life and threatens to replace her in his sympathies, and this jealousy finds expression in an exaggerated reaction to the irritations of life in the kitchen. For her part, the daughter-in-law soon learns that her husband is the only potential ally she has in her new home. Although her father-in-law may sympathize with her predicament, the expectation of avoidance prevents him from ever playing a protective role, and the inevitable conflicts between brothers effectively precludes any possibility of a sympathetic relationship with her husband's sisters-in-law. The young woman therefore turns to her husband as her confidant and her resource, hoping that she will be able to talk him into leaving the larger family, thus freeing herself forever of the tyranny of her mother-in-law. This tactic naturally serves to confirm the worst of her mother-in-law's fears, and her irritation and resentment of the daughter-in-law is increased proportionately. The result is a conflagration that feeds on its own flames. The more resentful and jealous the mother-in-law, the more she tyrannizes her son's wife; and the more she is victimized, the greater the daughter-in-law's efforts to pry her husband out of his natal family, this effort serving to confirm the older woman's suspicions and intensify her resentment.

This more basic cause of the conflict between the two women is often laid bare in times of crisis. In their daily encounters both women express themselves in the rhetoric of the kitchen, but when these

*593 minor encounters boil up into a crisis the real cause of their differ-
606 ences comes to the fore. When a village mother who was having great
152 difficulty with her daughter-in-law seemed to be losing control of the situation, her complaint was not that the daughter-in-law was lazy or incompetent, but rather that her daughter-in-law "is trying to steal my son from me." She told her son, "I'll go kill myself, and then the two of you can be alone and not be bothered with a mother." In this particular case the son responded in terms of the ideal role for a son, assuring his mother that he would send his wife away rather than cause his mother pain. In his own words, "How can I let you do that? If she isn't good to you, then I'll send her back to her family. How can I let you kill yourself?" Such a response naturally encourages a mother and temporarily calms her fears, but there is always the worrisome possibility that someday her daughter-in-law will alienate her from her son. To bear sons is a woman's first great trial in life; to maintain their loyalty and affection is the second and more difficult trial. As a well known proverb tells, "You can bear a son's body, but you can never know a son's heart." In sympathizing with a neighbor who was having trouble with her son's wife, a village woman expressed what is probably the most basic fear of every mother with a married son.

> "You raise your children, and then when they grow up they are always someone else's. Your daughter belongs to your son-in-law, and your son belongs to his wife. Especially those men who always listen to what their wives say. If you say two words to your daughter-in-law, then they'll get mad and move out of the family."

*597 606 *[584] The relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law is very different in the case of the *sīm-pûà* marriage. The girl who is adopted as a child and raised as a daughter in the family does not ordinarily become involved in the conflict that occupies the girl who enters her husband's family as a young adult. There are several reasons for this difference. For one thing, the *sīm-pûà* is socialized in terms of the routine of her husband's household, and so there is less occasion for conflict with her husband's mother over household matters. Nothing is demanded of the girl at the time of her marriage which she has not already learned as a daughter of the family. For another, the girl does not have a natal home to which she feels she can turn in desperation, nor does she have any other experience which might cause her to make unfavorable comparisons with her life in her husband's family. The only family life she has ever experienced is that of her husband's family. She knows of no other way of doing things and has no other standard. More importantly, the *sīm-pûà* marriage creates a family in which a girl's mother-in-law is also her mother, a woman's daughter-in-law also her daughter. A girl's husband's mother is the same woman who nursed her and cared for her when she was a child; and a woman's daughter-in-law is a child whom she herself raised and educated. The inevitable tensions of life as members of the same household are offset by a natural affection arising from a prolonged and intimate association. Moreover, there is also the possibility that this early association of mother-in-law and daughter-in-law precludes the development of the intense competition over the son and husband which is at

*597 606 the root of the conflict created by the preferred form of marriage. A mother can hardly think of herself as being replaced in her son's affections by a woman who is her own daughter, and a man's wife is not likely to work to alienate him from his parents when they are also her parents. She will not, like the wife entering as an adult, see her husband as her only potential allys and will not feel the need to make any of the exclusive claims on him that are so frightening to mothers. She will have accepted her mother's claim on her brother long before she conceived of having any claims of her own on him as a husband. Thus the sīm-pûà marriage solves the mother-in-law daughter-in-law conflict by simply replacing this relationship with the more satis- [601] factory mother-daughter relationship. The daughter-in-law in the preferred marriage only addresses her husband's parents as "father" and "mother," while in the sīm-pûà marriage a woman's husband's parents are her father and mother. One might say that the sīm-pûà marriage creates the social and psychological reality idealized in the kinship terminology.

*597 *593 152 We have already seen that adopted daughters are often cruelly mistreated by their foster parents. One might therefore expect that many adopted daughters would grow up resenting and perhaps hating their foster parents, and that this would result in anything but a satisfactory in-law relationship. This is not the case, however. For reasons which we do not entirely understand, the resentment which many adopted daughters feel as a result of this treatment is usually directed at their natal family rather than their foster family. They blame their biological parents for giving them away rather than their foster parents

*597 *593 152 for mistreating them. After relating at some length her unhappy childhood as an adopted daughter, one young village woman then want on to describe her relationship with her two sets of parents as follows:

> "I used to get so mad at my parents because they gave me away. Even now I sometimes feel that it is all their fault. If they hadn't given me away, I probably would have had a very happy life. I'm sure that it wouldn't have been like this. I can still remember when I was a little girl. My parents and my foster parents were good friends, and so my parents used to often come here. I remember once when I was playing out in the yard with a mat. I saw my mother coming down the road, and so I rolled up in the mat and hid. I didn't want to see her... If my parants had just opened their eyes and looked before they gave me away, it wouldn't have been so bad. If they had given me to a family that didn't have any children they would have liked me, but they gave me to a family that didn't need children, and wanted me to marry one of their sons. When I wouldn't do it, my foster mother tried to get my real mother to come and talk me into it, but there was nothing that she could do. I hated her much more than I hated my foster parents. I could never get used to the idea of having two mothers. I used to think, 'Everyone else has only one mother. Why should I have two mothers.' I knew that she was my real mother, but I would make myself think, 'This is my mother (her foster mother. She isn't my mother.'"

This tendency for adopted daughters to lay the greater blame on their biological parents was also affirmed by the mothers of several adopted daughters. A village woman who had given one of her daughters to a family living on the other side of the village told us that the girl "seems to hate me."

> "Whenever I bring her home to visit she doesn't want to stay here and when I go to get her she gives me a hateful look and turns her head away. I don't know why this is. Usually at that age they don't understand. I don't know whether she is mad because I gave her away or what. She just doesn't like me. She plays with her brothers and sisters fine, but she just doesn't like me. Whenever someone asks her about me, she tells them that I'm not her real mother, but her other sister's real mother."

*599 Adopted daughters do, of course, direct some of their resentment
152 toward their foster parents, but the disruptive effects of this upon
155 the mother-in-law daughter-in-law relationship are more than offset
by the positive elements of the relationship. While the daughter-in-
law in the preferred form of marriage soon learns to give as much as
she receives, it is the rare *sīm-pûà* who ever expresses any anger towards
her foster mother. Rather than becoming quarrelsome and hot tempered
as a result of the treatment she receives in her foster home, the
adopted daughter learns "to watch other people's faces." She may fear
her foster parents, but it is rare to find an adopted daughter who
*597 hates her foster parents. At the beginning of the last chapter we
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152 quoted at length a village woman who described her foster mother as
"always beating me whenever she was angry." This same woman also told
us that despite this treatment she was much more attached to her
foster mother than to her biological mother. In her own words,

> "You know it was very funny when I was a child. My foster mother was beating me up all the time, but still whenever I heard someone from my natal family coming to take me home for a visit I was scared and ran and hid in the toilet. My older brother and my foster mother and the others would all come and try to pull me out, but I would not come out. At that time it seemed to me that going back to my natal home would be just like cutting off a piece of my flesh. I just don't know why it was. My mother used to say to me, 'Your foster mother is always beating you and I am very nice to you, and yet you still don't want to come home to see us. How is that you can want to stay with your foster mother?' I felt the same way myself, and I just don't know why it was that I didn't want to go home. My foster mother was always beating me up, and yet if I didn't see her for a few hours I would cry and run to look for her. Even when I did go to visit my natal family I wouldn't play with the children who

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> lived around there. I would just sit there hoping that we would eat pretty soon so that I could run back home. I was fourteen years old before I finally spent a night in my natal home.

*597 *593 606 While we would argue that the sīm-pûà's willingness "to listen to her mother-in-law" is primarily a result of her experience as a child of the family, it is important to note that it is very much reinforced by the attitude of the family's neighbors and relatives. Quarreling and bickering between a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law in the preferred form of marriage is expected, and the most common reaction of outsiders is one of mild and somewhat bemused disapprobation. A mother-in-law cannot depend upon public opinion to help her in dealing with a recalcitrant daughter-in-law. In the case of the sīm-pûà marriage, however, the situation is very different. The daughter-in-law is then also a daughter of the family, and it would be an offense against filial piety for her to quarrel with her mother-in-law since she is also her mother. The daughter-in-law can criticize her mother-in-law without any great risk of losing social support, but the sīm-pûà who quarrels with her husband's mother may very well find herself ostracized as an unfilial daughter. The sīm-pûà marriage thus has the effect of binding the daughter-in-law to her husband's family with a double bond. She is expected to work and bear children for the family as a daughter-in-law, and she is expected to obey and honor her husband's parents as a daughter.

*597 *593 *583 606 182 Aside from its economic advantages, the sīm-pûà form of marriage would, therefore, also seem to have a real structural advantage. A

*597 *593 *583 606 182 daughter-in-law obtained in the preferred way will almost inevitably come into open conflict with her husband's mother, and as a result will often attempt to cause trouble between her husband and his parents as a means of escaping from the family. Such a marriage therefore constitutes a threat to the parents' security in their old age, beyond the more subtle fracture it produces in the mother's exclusive relationship with her son. By comparison, the girl who is adopted as a *sīm-pûà* is usually submissive and obedient in her relations with her husband's mother. Whatever tensions may exist in the situation are offset by the two women's long association and by the social fact that the younger woman is both a daughter-in-law and a daughter. We can thus see that there might be a reason for a family to choose the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage even though they were wealthy enough to afford the preferred form of marriage. Whereas the preferred marriage creates a complex of relationships which are a threat to the goals of the *kê*, the relationships created by the *sīm-pûà* marriage are generally conducive to the achievement of these goals. It is not enough for parents to produce sons and grandsons. They must also be certain that these children will not be alienated from them in the course of their lifetimes, and in terms of this goal the *sīm-pûà* marriage has real advantages over the preferred form of marriage.

*121 *583 182 183 But one further question needs to be considered to make this argument complete. The *sīm-pûà* marriage may be more conducive to family harmony than the preferred form of marriage, but are the people of Hsiachichou generally aware of this? If they are not, can we say

*121 *583 182 183 that the high frequency of *sīm-pûà* adoptions is partially explained by this structural advantage? Curiously enough, the question is one which is not even asked in many anthropological analyses. Having abstracted what he considers to be the structural requirements of the system, the analyst then explains this or that aspect of the system in terms of its relationships to these needs, never asking himself whether or not the people who constitute the society are aware of these requirements. Such explanations strike this anthropologist as being comparable to saying that a person's heart beats because he will die if it doesn't. Social structure and culture do not act. Only individual human organisms act, and they act only in terms of their own motives and their own goals. The needs of a social system can only become explanations of the existence of certain aspects of that system when these needs can be phrased in terms of the goals and motives of human actors. We therefore consider it of particular importance to point out that the people of Hisachichou are very much aware of the structural advantages of the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage. They sometimes choose this form of marriage over the preferred form of marriage because they recognize that such a marriage has advantages with regard *583 *593 182 183 606 to what they consider the important goals of the family. After pointing out that the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage has the advantage of being considerably less expensive than the preferred form of marriage, many of our informants then went on to note that the *sīm-pûà* marriage assures a family of having a daughter-in-law "who will listen to your words." When asked why it was important to have a girl such as this, the typical

*583 informant pointed out that "this makes it better because she won't
*593 always be talking to her husband about his parents." The following
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183 statement by an elderly village woman is typical of statements by
606 other villagers.

> "It is always better for a boy to marry an adopted daughter than to marry a girl from another family. This is because you can get to know an adopted daughter's disposition better and can correct her without causing a lot of trouble. A girl from another family will always get mad when you try to correct her, and then she will say things to her husband and make trouble with his parents."

*583 The choice between the sīm-pûà marriage and the preferred marriage
*597 would thus seem to involve at least three major considerations.
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556 Weighing in favor of the preferred marriage is the fact that it is the
182 socially correct way of marrying and the most prestigious form of
183 marriage. It is the form of marriage which everyone in Hsiachichou
would choose if form were the only consideration. Favoring the sīm-pûà form of marriage is the fact that it is the cheaper way of obtaining a wife for a son, and also the recognition that it creates a
[606] structure which is more compatible with the goals of the family. By
adopting a girl and raising her as a wife for their son a family replaces a tense and dangerous relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law with the more satisfactory mother-daughter
[178] relationship. Generally speaking, wealthy families of the pre-1930
period chose the preferred marriage more often than the sīm-pûà marriage because they were more concerned with status and could afford the expense of such a marriage. Poorer families, on the other hand, more often chose the sīm-pûà form of marriage as a way to avoid the

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near ruinous expense of the preferred marriage. There was not, however, a perfect correlation between these decisions and the family's wealth. Many of the wealthiest families in the community apparently chose the *sīn-pûà* marriage because of its structural advantages, and many of the poorer families decided in favor of the preferred form of marriage as a means of enhancing their social standing. Given the structural advantages of the *sīn-pûà* form of marriage and the generally low economic status of most of Hisachichou in the years before 1930, the fact that as many as half of the families living in the community did not adopt *sīn-pûà* for their sons testifies to the importance of prestige and tradition as determinants of behavior in the traditional society.

CHAPTER 10

MARRIAGE AND INCEST

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In the early decades of this century decisions about marriage and adoption in Hsiachichou were the perogative of the senior generations of the family. When they decided to adopt a sīm-pûà and raise her as a wife for a son this decision committed the boy to a particular kind of marriage. He had little more to say about marrying the girl when he reached the appropriate age than he had had to say about her adoption when he was a child. Only the parents could reverse their original decision and that they would change their minds was very unlikely. The investment was too great. To arrange a preferred marriage with its tremendous expense after having already spent the money to raise a sīm-pûà would be to invite disaster for some families and a painful economic waste for all families. As a result, the great majority of sīm-pûà adoptions made in the early part of the century led to marriages. Of the 22 sim-pua adoptions which took place before 1910 all but 6 culminated in a marriage, and in 4 of these 6 cases the failure of the arrangement was due to the death of either the sīm-pûà or her foster brother. The two exceptions involved one case in which the boy's mother "decided that she didn't like the girl and sent her back to her natal family," and one unusual case in which the son was able to dissuade his parents from their original plans.

178 As we have already seen, the years between 1930 and 1960 were
*589 years of change in Hsiachichou. The completion of the rerouted
*593 Taipei-Hsinchu railroad and construction of factories in the nearby
[496] market town created new wage earning opportunities, and the rapidly
[464] expanding population of Hsiachichou put pressure on the village to take
[161] advantage of these opportunities. Agriculture became a less important
[933] element in the economy of the community, and as agriculture declined
in importance so did the traditional authority of the senior genera-
[464] tions. A young man formerly dependent upon his parent's land for a livelihood now had the option of seeking an independent income as a wage worker. Backed by the potential of economic independence, the younger generations began to challenge their parents' perogatives with regard to marriage and adoption. The traditional system of arranged marriages gave way in the 1920's to a system in which the younger members of the family were granted a nominal voice in marriage negotiations, and by the late 1930's the unmarried and recently married members of the *kê* had secured control of their fates and those of their children. Although arranged marriages were still common in Hsiachichou even in the post-war period, they were arranged only with the consent of the young people. In 1960 we found that most of the parents in the village felt that they were no longer able to exert any real control over decisions concerning marriage and adoption. As one of our elderly informants complained, "The young people now have to do everything their own way. They don't care at all what their parents want them to do."

*589 *593 *597 We have already seen earlier that the shift in the authority structure of the family did not change the viewpoint of the family towards decisions about female adoption. Although a girl's parents tended to be somewhat more concerned about Her fate than her grandparents, the two generations usually made their decisions about which children to give away in much the same terms. They kept those girls who were of most value in terms of the goal of genealogical continuity, and they gave away those girls who were the least value with reference to this goal. How then did this change in authority effect decisions concerning the *sīm-pûà* form of adoption? Do the younger members of family approach such a marriage in the same terms as their parents and grandparents, or do they look at the question of their own marriage from a different point of view. Do they choose to marry a *sīm-pûà* when they see the possibility of a choice, or do they more often refuse to make such a marriage even though their parents have raised a girl with such a marriage in mind? The answer is unequivocal. During the years 1910-1930 the senior generations continued to adopt *sīm-pûà* for their male offspring at about the same rate as they had in the years before 1910, but in only two instances did these adoptions culminate in a marriage when the children reached the appropriate age. In two cases either the boy or the girl died before reaching marriageable age, and in 15 cases one or both of them refused to go through with the marriage. Although the young adults of the family may agree with their parents as to the terms in which female children should be evaluated, it seems clear that they do not agree with them as to the

*584 *593 desirability of the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage, at least not when it is *597 a question of their own marriage.

*584 *593 *121 178 [171] In view of the findings of studies of juvenile behavior in the United States, one is tempted to interpret this rejection of the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage as one symptom of a more general rejection of parental authority. From this perspective one might argue that there was nothing undesirable about such marriages other than the fact that they represented an extreme case of the imposition of parental will. But while such a general motivation may account for a part of the younger people's resistance, it is not an adequate explanation of their complete rejection of this form of marriage. If the revolt against the *sīm-pûà* marriage were just one aspect of a more general revolt against parental authority, we should expect to find a general resistance to all forms of arranged marriages, but such information as we have seems to indicate that this is not the case. At least 9 of the 15 men who refused to marry their *sīm-pûà* did allow their parents to choose a bride and make all of the arrangements to marry them in the preferred way, and in only 2 or possibly 3 of the cases did the young man insist upon marrying a particular girl against his parents' will. It would therefore seem that what the young were resisting was the specific form of marriage rather than simply the imposition of parental authority.

*584 178 177 Another possible explanation of the rejection of the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage is that it is the result of what most foreigners are pleased to call "modernization." Since this form of marriage is

#584 regarded by foreigners as one of the more unusual Taiwanese customs,
178 it might easily become identified for the younger generation as
177 symbolic of the traditional society. Young people might therefore
be particularly reluctant to make such marriages because of their
association with the "old" as contrasted with the "new". Such a line
of argument undoubtedly contains a certain amount of truth. As
Japanese and Western influence became strong on Taiwan and the younger
generation was attracted by what was identified for them as "modern"
and "new," the sīm-pûà marriage did tend to be tagged as "traditional"
and "the old way of doing things." Again, however, this cannot be the
whole picture, for resistance to the sīm-pûà form of marriage is not
a new phenomenon. There is evidence which seems to indicate that
even before foreign influences had any appreciable effect on Taiwan
the sīm-pûà marriage was generally regarded as an unhappy fate by
#584 those who had to make such a marriage. While many of our older informants in the village would argue that the sīm-pûà form of marriage
was a good thing, this was always from the point of view of their
status as parents or grandparents. When asked if they themselves
had been happy to make such a marriage they were generally as opposed
[585] to the idea as their children. It is also relevant here to note the
use of the term sàng-cùe-tûi to refer to the brief New Year's ceremony
which unites a man and his foster sister as husband and wife. The
term is best translated simply "pushing them together," and is usually
explained with a rough pushing movement of both hands. Since the
phrase is traditional as well as common usage, it would seem to

*584 suggest a long standing reluctance to the *sīm-pûà* marriage on the part of those facing the prospect of such a marriage.

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626 Before looking further for the source of the younger generation's distaste for the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage, we should note that whatever their reasons are they must be very good ones. The consequences for a young man or young woman who refuses to make such a marriage are often far from pleasant. The parents are almost certain to be angry with a son who refuses to participate in their plans, and they may even go so far as to disinherit him. We knew of one young man whose father drove him out of the house when he refused to marry his *sīm-pûà*, and though they were later reconciled the father made his more obedient younger son the head of the household. At the very least the young man who refuses to marry a *sīm-pûà* will become the object of a good deal of unfavorable public comment. The primary duty of a male in this life is to obey and provide for his parents, and he is almost certain to be branded "unfilial" if he appears to come in conflict with his parents over the matter of his marriage. If there is the possibility that the parents can yield gracefully, as in the case of the preferred marriage where the crucial question is usually the choice of the particular girl, a son can resist his parents without appearing to come into conflict with them. The difficulty in the case of the *sīm-pûà* marriage is that the parents are always very much committed to their prior decision because they have raised the girl, and as a result the young man who is opposed to making such a marriage will usually be forced to extreme measures which will make the conflict apparent to all.

*584 But whatever the consequences for the son of the family they are
*597 seldom as severe as for the *sīm-pūà* who resists marrying her foster
*593 brother. The girl's position in the family is a weaker one, and as
*562
626 a result she must pay a higher price for her intransigence. Most
parents cannot afford to alienate one of their sons permanently, but there is no point in retaining the loyalty of an adopted daughter if she refuses to play the role for which she was adopted. Parents are therefore ready to apply whatever pressures are necessary in order to make the girl acquiesce to their plans. As a result, when it is the girl who takes the lead in opposing the marriage she must often go
[548] to extreme lengths to overcome her parents' determination. One
[464] village girl ran away to her natal home rather than marry her foster
brother, and we know of at least three cases in which *sīm-pūà* left their foster homes to become prostitutes. They were either unwilling or unable to return to their natal families, and this was the only way in which they could manage to support themselves independently.

A girl's refusing to marry her foster brother also makes it difficult for her to marry out of the family. Her foster parents may refuse to arrange another marriage as a means of punishing her, and even if they do call in a go-between it may be difficult to find a family willing to take a former *sīm-pūà* as a daughter-in-law. Prospective in-laws suspect that the foster parents may have decided to allow her to marry out of the family because of "an unmanageable temper" or other hidden faults. Although most *sīm-pūà* do eventually marry despite these difficulties, we know of at least one girl in

*584 Hsiachichou who did not. What is perhaps more important, when girls
*593 do find a husband outside the family they still bear a certain stigma.
*597 A girl who is adopted as a sīm-pûà is in some sense married simply as
*562 626 a result of the adoption, regardless of whether or not she ever becomes
her foster brother's wife. If she later marries out of the family, she is said to "have married twice," and is regarded with much the same disparagement as the widow who remarries. When we asked one village woman if a sīm-pûà could marry out of her foster family, she answered "Yes, you can do that, but it doesn't look good. People will say, 'Oh, that woman who married twice!'"

*584 We have seen in the last chapter that the sīm-pûà marriage has
*597 several very real advantages over the preferred farm of marriage. It
183 835 is much less expensive than the preferred marriage and it is also more
conducive to family harmony. Why was it then that most young people refused to make such marriages as soon as they had acquired a voice in the matter of their own marriage? Why was it that some girls preferred prostitution to marrying their foster brothers? Why is it that the parties to the sīm-pûà marriage have always had to be "pushed together?" When asked such questions many village informants answered in such a way as to suggest that they found the idea of such a marriage personally distasteful. Several women told us that they thought that marrying one's foster brother was bōu ì-sǔ, "meaningless" or "dull;" and a number of bthers indicated that they felt that such a marriage was kiàn-siǎu, "embarrassing." Although the sīm-pûà marriage is culturally recognized and socially acceptable, the impression we were

*584 given by many villagers was that they privately regard it as something
*597 very like incest. While we were told that marriage with a distant
183 clan mate is regarded as incest, none of our informants seemed to
835 display any personal revulsion in their attitudes toward such a union. In the case of the *sīm-pûà* marriage, on the other hand, it was agreed that no one could criticize a person for making such a marriage, but at the same time most people seem to feel uncomfortable about the idea of making such a marriage themselves. The discrepancy between social and private attitudes to the *sīm-pûà* marriage is perhaps most apparent in the behavior of those young people who refused to make such a marriage. They realize that the marriage is proper and feel guilty about not acquiescing in their parents' plans, but still they say that they could not submit to the marriage "because it was embarrassing."

Because of this embarrassment we were unable to get most of the villagers to discuss their feelings about the *sīm-pûà* marriage in any detail. Questions about the subject usually elicited the same kind of response as questions about personal sexual habits. One of the few exceptions was a young woman who talked to us at some length about her reason for refusing to marry her foster brother. While we do not have the information necessary to say that her reactions are typical, they do at least seem congruent with the less specific reactions of other
*584 informants.

*593 "My father was so mad at me when I didn't want to
*597 marry my brother, but there was nothing he could do. I
835 just wouldn't do it, and I wouldn't run away either. There
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#584 was nothing he could do. They couldn't just kick me out of
#593 the house. He used to get so mad at me that he wouldn't
#597 even talk to me, but now he seems to have gotten over that.
835 Now he understands me better, and is nice to me."

183 Did he try to make you marry your brother?

"Of course. Everyone were tried very hard. He didn't say anything to me himself; he had my mother talk to me. All the neighbors helped, too. He also sent for my real mother to talk to me but she can't argue very well. When I said something to her she didn't know what to say next. The neighbors would say something to her, and she would get mad and come and scold me. I told her, 'I'm going to be very filial. It's not that I'm not filial. I just don't want to marry him. I will treat you even better later than I treat you now.' I tried very hard to be filial to her, but when I asked her to come and go to a movie or something, she would say, 'Oh, let's wait until he (the informant's foster brother) gets married.' But then she died just after he married. I tried very hard to be filial to her but I just didn't get the chance. Even now that I'm not married I don't feel bad about what I did. My brother and his wife are happy. If I had given in and married him, I am sure that we would dislike each other very much by now."

But don't lots of people who marry in this way get along pretty well?

"Well, those who really get along are very few. You can say that none of them like it. Really, it is meaningless to marry your foster brother. I really think it is meaningless. One day after I refused a friend of mine who married a mainlander invited me to dinner at her house and my real father was there. After we had had dinner he began to scold me, telling me that I ought to marry my brother. I was so mad. I didn't like him in the first place, and when he did this I just felt that he was trying to lose my face and let everyone know that I wasn't filial. I got so mad my hands were cold, and I almost passed out. My mother was the one who bore me so she understood more, and she finally made him stop talking. But I was really mad. When I went home for a visit after my brother was married my father said to me, 'I don't see how you can stand it. How can you go on living in that house? I would have thought that you would have run away a long time ago.' When you think about it, it is meaningless for me to go on living here, but I felt like telling him, 'How can you think that I could come back here and get used to living with all of you again? From the time

*584 I was a child I hated you for giving me away, so how could
*593 I live with you now?' But I didn't dare say this because
*597 they were my real parents."

835 Why did your father say that you should be embarrassed to go
183 on living here?

"After I had done this there was no point in my living here anymore. My foster mother was the only one who really liked me, and she was already dead then. There just wasn't any point to it anymore. But I just couldn't make myself think of going to live with my real parents. Not even now that I am older and understand it all. And I really don't see how my foster father could have tried to make me marry my brother. When he married his foster sister she ran away after two days and never came back again. I'm sure he must remember that, and so I don't see how he could want me to make such a marriage. His foster sister lives in Taipei now, and she lives very well. The one time I met her though she was very embarrassed. After she ran away she married again, and she now has a very good life."

Why didn't she run away before she was married?

"I don't know. I guess she was just better behaved than I am. But then after she married the more she thought about it the more meaningless it was, and so the only thing she could do was to run away. And I think that was the best thing for her to do."

Why do you say that it would have been meaningless for you to marry your foster brother?

"I don't know. I just couldn't do it. I felt embarrassed about it. At that time I thought to myself, 'It is just because I'm young and don't want to get married yet.' And I didn't want to get married but that wasn't the real reason. I think that it was because he was my brother. Marrying your brother! I felt embarrassed about it. I don't even talk to him now unless I have to. I don't know why it is, but I just feel embarrassed about it."

*584 The parties to the preferred marriage or the matrilocal marriage
*597 do not ordinarily meet until they are biologically mature, but the
*593 man and woman who become husband and wife in the sīm-pūà marriage are
associated with one another from early childhood. A woman with male

*584 children may give away a recently born female child and adopt a *sīm-pûà*
*593 in her place, nursing her future daughter-in-law in place of her own
*597 daughter. Almost all *sīm-pûà* are adopted before the age of four, and
the average for girls in Hsiachichou is somewhere between the ages of
two and three. Although a *sīm-pûà* is a daughter-in-law in her foster
family insofar as her marriage status is concerned, the relation
between her and her future husband during their childhood is more like
[561] that of brother and sister. As children they address one another as
[513] brother and sister; they play and eat together just as do the other
children of the family; and in most families they share the same sleeping platform with their parents until they are nine or ten years of age. At a later age when they have bean made aware of their future relationship as husband and wife, they may choose to avoid one another to some extent, but this is not socially required of them. The individual attitudes of the villagers and the general mores of the community seem to agree that a *sīm-pûà* and her foster brother are brother and sister until they become husband and wife.

*584 Although there are undoubtedly other factors which enter into
*597 the reactions of many villagers to the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage, our
*593 suggestion is that the rejection of this form of marriage is primarily
*121 the result of a sexual aversion arising out of their childhood asso-
153 ciation. It is possible that in growing up in a situation in which
835 they are identified as "brother" and "sister," the couple comes to think of themselves as real siblings. They therefore find the thought of marriage "embarrassing" because it is generally taboo for any

*584 brother and sister to marry. The effect of their childhood associa-
*597 tion is to create conditions which result in a generalization of the
*593 incest taboo. Another possible interpretation is that the very fact
*721 of their intimate childhood association is itself directly respon-
835 sible for this feeling of aversion. As Edward Westermarck suggested
153 some eighty years ago, it may be that the incest taboo is a consequence of "intimate and prolonged childhood association." In Westermarck's words, "the fundamental cause of exogamous prohibitinns seems to be the remarkable absence of erotic feelings betwenn persons living very closely together from childhood, leading to a positive feeling of aversion when the act is thought of."[1] The first hypothesis suggests that foster siblings are averse to the idea of their sexual union because they consider themselves brother and sister, while the second hypothesis suggests that they reject the idea of their union because they have lived together as brother and sister.

Which of these two interpretations is correct must unfortunately remain a moot question so far as these data are concerned. The two crucial variables are experimentally confounded. The parties to the *sím-pũà* marriage grow up in conditions which identify them as brother and sister, and they also experience a prolonged and intimate association from early childhood. But regardless of whether the crucial antecedent condition is their sibling identification or their early and prolonged contact, it seems clear that most of the parties to the *sím-pũà* marriage do experience a real aversion to the idea of their sexual
000 union. Aside from the reports of many villagers that such marriages

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[1] Edward Westermarck, *The History of Human Marriage*, (London: Macmillan and Co. Limited, 1921), Vol. II, p. vi.

Aside from the reports of many villagers that such marriages[1]
*584 are "embarrassing" and "uninteresting," we also have evidence that
*597 there is a difference in the actual behavior of persons who have
*593 made a _sīm-pûà_ marriage. Men and women who have made such marriages
837 are more likely to seek extra-marital sexual satisfaction than people
831 who have married in other ways, and many men who have been forced to
marry a _sīm-pûà_ arrange their lives so as to avoid sexual contact with
their wives for prolonged periods of time. One village man who married
his foster sister was said to have slept with his wife only twice in
some twenty years of marriage. According to one of his neighbors,
"He often told me, 'I have only been at home two nights, and I have
fathered two sons.'" Although this is undoubtedly an exaggeration of
male vanity, it is apparently true that the man spent very little
time with his wife. A woman with whom he lived for the last twelve
years of his married life told us that "he only lived at home for a
short time after he was first married. After that he never spent a
night at home."

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548 As is probably the case in every Chinese community, extra-marital
relations are not an uncommon aspect of the male's life in Hsiachichou.
Every market town in the area has at least one or two brothels, and
every hotel and inn also functions as a house of prostitution. From
the very early years of their marriage, many men visit prostitutes as
*583 frequently as their circumstances allow. What is of interest to us here
837 is that the frequency with which a man avails himself of these opportunities
seems to be at least in part a function of the type of marriage
he has made. During the course of our field work we attempted to record

[1] [i.e., _sīm-pûà_ marriages -- Analyst]

*583 837 all village gossip and other information which would allow us to estimate in a rough way the frequency with which the men in our genealogies had sought extra-marital sexual relations. The striking conclusion from these data is that men who had made *sīm-pûà* marriages were more likely to engage in frequent extra-marital affairs than men who had married matrilocally or in the preferred way. Whereas we have evidence of frequent extra-marital relations for 14 (15 percent) of the 96 men who made either preferred or matrilocal marriages, we find a high frequency of infidelity among 11 (48 percent) of the 23 men who were forced to make a *sīm-pûà* marriage. While these data are certainly not entirely accurate, for the obvious reason, there is no reason to believe that there is a bias inflating the count for men who married *sīm-pûà*. There is no stereotype of the husband in the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage which might elicit biased responses, and we were unaware of the relevance of our data at the time they were being collected.

*583 *593 837 What is perhaps more significant than this tendency for men who marry *sīm-pûà* to seek sexual satisfaction elsewhere is that this often involves their avoiding sexual relations with their wives. Most men who have established a relationship with another woman visit her occasionally as they have the inclination, but men who are married to a *sīm-pûà* typically spend all of their nights with their mistresses, avoiding sexual relations with their wives several years at a time. If the man's parental family is a farming family, and if he is needed to help with the work in the fields, he will usually return home during the day to work with his father, eating his meals and otherwise

*583 participating in the family on a daily basis. If he is a coal miner
*593 or laborer whose job is in another town or in the mountains, he may
837 spend several weeks at a time away from the village, living almost exclusively with his mistress but sending money home to help support his parents. A case typical of such arrangements is that described by a forty year old woman whose husband and former brother has spent most of the twenty years of their married life living with another woman.

> "We were married when I was eighteen years old, but my husband didn't live here very long after we were married. When my daugher was about four years old and my son about three, my husband went away to live with another woman. I thought of going back to my natal home, but then I thought that these things are all decided by fortune. Also, I was very fond of my foster mother, and she took care of the children while I went to work gathering rocks to help support the family. That first woman my husband lived with has been dead now for about ten years, but before she died they adopted two daughters. (One of these girls is now married to the informant's son.) Now my husband is living in Nankang with another woman, but they have no children of their own, only one adopted daughter. Most of the year my husband works in a coal mine, but during the harvest season he goes from farm to farm buying rice stalks which he sells to a factory in Shihlin. He makes about NT$900 a month, and sends about NT$200 or NT$300 home. He didn't use to send any money home at all except when he had a very good job or when he was in a good mood, but now he sends some money almost every month."
>
> *If your mother liked you so well, why did she let her son go out and live with another woman?*
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> "Oh, he is her only son and so she didn't like to reprimand him. Besides he wouldn't listen to her anyway."

*583 Men who marry matrilocally or in the preferred way also occasionally
837 take a mistress, and this sometimes leads to similar separations. What leads us to argue that the conditions of the *sīm-pūà* marriage

*583 837 produce a definite sexual aversion is that such separations are much more common among men who have married *sīm-pûà* than among men who married in other ways. Of those 119 men whose life histories we know in some detail at least 13 spent two or more years of their married lives living away from their parental home with a woman other than their wife. These 13 men included 3 (4 percent) of 70 men who had married in the preferred way, 2 (8 percent) of the 26 men who had married matrilocally and 8 (35 percent) of 23 men who married a *sīm-pûà* .. There thus appears to be a striking difference between the sexual behavior of those men whose association with their wives began in childhood and those who did not come into contact with their wives until adulthood.

*562 837 While it is expected that men who can afford to will upon occasion visit prostitutes or professional wine house girls, it is strictly forbidden for a married woman to engage in any kind of extra-marital [548] relations. A young unmarried woman whose family is poor and does not have sons to depend upon may work as a prostitute without arousing unfavorable public opinion, but for a married woman to form any kind of liaison is generally regarded as a serious breach of morality. The not very surprising result is that extra-marital relations are much *583 837 *562 more common among men than among women. What is somewhat more interesting is thatthe majority of those women who do commit adultery are women who have been forced to marry a foster brother. We do not know of a single case of adultery among women who married in the preferred way, and the only cases among women who married matrilocally

*583 involved two young women who formerly had been prostitutes. By comparison,
*562 we find at least 5 cases of adultery among the 23 women who
837 married as sīm-pūà. It is also interesting to note that these breeches
*583 *593 on the part of the women who married as sīm-pūà did not arouse the
837 wrath of husbandly outrage. The expectation of most villagers is that
152 the husband would beat and perhaps even kill a wife for committing adultery, but in none of these instances did the husband seem particularly concerned about the situation. Although it was well known in the village that the wife of one of these men had been having an affair with a neighbor for several years, the husband ignored the situation until he was finally forced to react by finding the couple in flagrante delicto in his own house. Perhaps sexual interest is a necessary condition of jealousy, and these husbands simply lacked such
*593 interest in their wives.

*583 It would thus appear that the sexual relationship created by the
831 sīm-pūà form of marriage is something less than satisfactory. The
152 partners to such a marriage are more likely to seek sexual satisfaction outside of marriage, and men who have married in this way tend to avoid sexual relations with their wives. Perhaps this is because they come to regard one another as brother and sister, or perhaps their aversion to one another is a result of a psychological set created by their early and prolonged association. Whatever the reason it seems clear that the conditions of the sīm-pūà marriage create a sexual aversion which is not characteristic of the other two forms of marriage. Why is it that parties to the sīm-pūà marriage have always

#593
#583 831 152 had to be "pushed together," and why is it that young people refused to make such marriages as soon as they were in a position to do so? The answer would seem to be simply the one they themselves give. Such marriages are "uninteresting" and "embarrassing." To marry a man or woman with whom one has lived from childhood is too much like marrying a brother or sister. Such marriages lack the interest and excitement of marriage with a person from another family, and to some extent the idea of such a union may even arouse feelings of positive revulsion.

#583 #597 The two cases in which men born after 1910 did later marry their sīm-pûà tend to support rather than weaken this argument. Unlike the other fourteen cases in which the young people refused to make a sīm-pûà marriage, these two couples did not grow up as members of the same household. In both cases the son was the offspring of a woman who had married as a sīm-pûà, and the adopted daughter a child which the husband had adopted while living with another woman. In one case the future wife did not enter her husband's household until the time of their marriage, and in the other they did not begin to live under the same roof until the girl was seventeen years of age. Since it would be impossible for the couple to marry if the girl was not thought of as a sīm-pûà, the two marriages were both defined by the family and by the couples themselves as sīm-pûà marriages. We therefore have in these two cases instances of sīm-pûà marriages without the usual conditions of early and constant association as brother and sister. The fact that these were the only two sīm-pûà marriages among those

*583 *597 men born after 1910 would thus seem to lend weight to our argument that it is the condition of early association which is responsible for the general aversion to this form of marriage. If the rejection of the sīm-pûa form of marriage were simply a revolt against a symbol of parental authority and the traditional way of life, these two couples would have been just as likely to reject this form of marriage as those who grew up in the same household.

*584 *597 178 *[593] The refusal of so many poung people to acquiesce in their parents' plans for a sīm-pûa marriage naturally had the effect of making parents reconsider the advantages of sīm-pûa adoptions. If the couple refused to marry after the parents had gone to the expense of raising the girl, the family then stood to suffer a double loss. They would have wasted the money invested in raising the girl, and they would also have to bear the expense of marrying her out of the family. The advantages of the sīm-pûa form of marriage were thus overshadowed by the risks, and as a result we find a sharp decline in the rate of sīm-pûa adoptions after 1930. As compared with a rate of 41 (42 percent) adoptions for 98 boys in the years before 1930, we find only 5 (15 percent) adoptions among a total of 34 boys born in the years 1930-1940. If one or two of the adoptions made during these ten years had matured into a marriage, a few parents would probably have been encouraged to make adoptions in later years. The advantages of the sīm-pûa marriage are perhaps worth a certain risk. But when none of the 5 adoptions made in the years between 1930-1940 culminated in a marriage, the inevitable result was a further decline in the rate of adoption after 1940. We

*584 *597 178 find only 3 (2 percent) adoptions for a total of 142 boys born in the years between 1940 and 1960, and it would appear that the *sĩn-pûà* marriage will soon be an institution of the past in the village of *[592] Hsiachichou. In order to restore it one would have to reinstitute complete parental authority in the *kê*. It was a system which had many advantages for the senior generations of the family, but it was an arrangement into which the younger generations entered only under compulsion.

*583 *584 *593 858 We began this analysis of the *sĩn-pûà* marriage in Hsiachichou by noting that most villagers take the view that children exist for the sake of their parents and the family rather than the family and the parents for the sake of the children. We are now in a position to offer some evidence for this statement. We have seen that the *sĩn-pûà* form of marriage has several very real advantages for the senior generations of the family, and we have also seen that it is at best an unhappy fate for those who are forced to make such a marriage. Since we can safely assume that those parents who have made *sĩn-pûà* marriages themselves are vividly aware of its difficulties, it is significant to note that they are no less likely to adopt *sĩn-pûà* for their sons than are parents who did not make such a marriage. *Sĩn-pûà* marriages were planned for 12 (27 percent) of the 45 boys born to parents who had themselves made such a marriage, and for 40 (19 percent) of 208 boys born to parents who had married either matrilocally or in the preferred way. While it would be a mistake to conclude that village parents are unconcerned about the happiness of their children, it would be an even worse mistake to assume that they put the welfare of their children before that of the family.

CHAPTER 11

THE DECISION TO ADOPT

#597 During the past seventy years at least 20 women who married #562 into Hsiachichou had the great misfortune to not bear male children. 842 In 12 of these 20 cases the woman did not bear any children at all, and in the other 8 cases she bore only female children. There have also been a large number of women who married into village families and did not bear any male children until a number of years after their marriage. We can be certain that in every one of these cases the family in question would have liked to adopt a male child. The value of male children is so pervasive in the society that every family without sons will naturally be anxious about the fact, and the most obvious solution to the problem is to adopt a male child. It is also very likely that many of those families with only one male child would likewise have been happy to adopt a boy if the opportunity had been offered. Most people in the village consider it a risk to depend upon only a single son or grandson. One of our informants told us, "You have to have at least two or three sons. If you have only one son, and he isn't good to you, then what can you do? You should have several sons so that if one isn't good to you you can lean on the other."

#562 But while the majority of village families would have been pleased #597 at one time or another to be able to adopt a male child, the fact is that very few families ever have. We find in our genealogical

*597 records only 4 cases of male adoption in the years before 1930, and only *562 4 more in the years after 1930. For reasons which we have discussed earlier, it is always difficult for a family to arrange to adopt a *kùe-páng-kià:*. Most families value their male children so highly that they are not willing to part with one of them simply because of the plight of a relative. There is no great compensation, and the loss is considerable. In the years before 1930 no family living in Hsiachi*chou adopted a male child from an agnate of another* *kê*, and we know of [432] only one case of such an adoption in the years since 1930. The family which wants to adopt a son must almost always buy the child from a stranger or a professional dealer, and this involves difficulties so serious as to discourage most families from undertaking an adoption.

*597 One of these difficulties is, of course, the very expense of buying 556 a male child. Many families cannot manage to accumulate the necessary [435] six or seven thousand dollars, and those who can are usually unwilling to spend so much money on a gamble. If they could be certain that they were not going to bear male children of their own, a family would probably be willing to spend all they could possibly afford to obtain a son, but they cannot be certain and the price is very high. They therefore hesitate in the hope that they may eventually have children of their own. The importance of the consideration of the costs of buying a male child is apparent from the fact that it has only been the wealthiest families in the village which have adopted male children. Three of the 8 adoptions by families living in Hsiachichou were among those few families which own the majority of the village land and one other adoption was

*597 556 made by a man who was for a long time a highly successful trader on the mainland of China. The only case of male adoptions by families which we know to have been poor were cases in which the family did not have to buy the child. These included the one case in which an agnate gave a boy in adoption to a village family, and one other in which a *sim-pua* was allowed to marry out of her foster family on the condition that she give her first born child to her foster brother whom she was to have married.

*597 *593 [602] Unlike Chinese in many other parts of the country, the people of Hsiachichou do not insist that an adopted son be of the same agnatic line as his foster parents. The attitude of people here is that "once you adopt a child he is your own no matter whom you adopt him from. It doesn't matter whether he is of the same blood or not." But while the people of Hsiachichou do not worry about the pedigree of a child bought from a stranger, they do worry very much about the child's loyalty to his foster parents. The child's parents may later attempt to persuade him to return to his natal family, or the child may himself discover the fact of his adoption and want to return to his parents. As an example of the dangers involved in buying a child our village informants often cited the current difficulties of a village woman by the name of Ong Chun-ieng. After having worked for a number of years as a prostitute in Taipei and Wanhua, Ong Chun-ieng adopted a male child whom she sent to live with her own foster mother in Hsiachichou. [270] [689] Later Ong Chun-ieng was arrested and imprisoned for using narcotics, and the boy became part of a gang "living in air raid shelters and making their living by stealing."

*599 *593 [685] and making their living by stealing." The boy himself told several villagers that he had to steal so that he would have money to buy food for his mother in prison. Whatever the reason for his activities, he was eventually arrested and briefly confined in a juvenile ward. When this news somehow reached his natal family which lives not far from Hsiachichou, the boy's father came to the village and angrily accused Ong Chun-ieng's mother of "not caring whether the child is in prison or not." He demanded that the family return the child to him "if they didn't care what happened to him," and Ong Chun-ieng's mother answered that "you just want him back now because he is old enough to work." After several such visits, each of which precipitated a bitter quarrel in the path before the house, the father did somehow manage to reclaim the boy, and he lived with his natal family a number of months before finally returning to Hsiachichou.

While it is difficult to estimate the frequency of such incidents they evidently occur often enough to make most people apprehensive about buying a male child. Those families who do make such adoptions always make every effort to conceal the fact of his adoption from the child himself, hoping in this way to prevent his becoming involved with his real parents. One village family who had bought a male child told us that for years they hid the boy's registration card from him, and another village family is said to have bribed the police to register the child as having been born into the family. People who want to sell a male child recognize these fears and try to counter them by traveling to an area of the island where they are not known so that they can

*593 convince prospective customers that they need not worry about interference by the child's parents. Both of the dealers who visited Hsiachichou during our stay in the village stressed the fact that they were from another part of the island. As one of them told an interested villager, "You can see from the way I talk that I am not from this part of the island. I come from the South, and so you don't have to worry. I will never come back here again, and the child will never be able to find me."
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*597 As a result of the expense and the danger involved, most families do not buy a child until they have given up all hope of producing their own male children. Although we can safely assume that many families with only one son would have liked a second son, we do not find a single case of male adoption in Hsiachichou by a family with at least one male child. What is even more indicative of the general reluctance to buy male children is that families which do not have sons do not ordinarily buy a son if the wife has borne a daughter. The only exceptions are those cases in which the family has good reason to believe that the woman will not bear more children. One family adopted a son when the wife became an invalid after the birth of her daughter, and another was persuaded to buy a child when their son deserted his wife after having fathered only a girl. When such special circumstances as these are not involved, the family in which the wife has borne at least one daughter will never adopt a child. The fact that she bore the one child apparently gives them hope that she will bear others and that one of them will be a son, and so they decide against the risk

*599 involved in paying a large sum of money for a child whose loyalty would always be a matter of concern.

The reluctance of most families to buy a male child is also evident in the fact that in 5 of the 8 cases of male adoption in Hsiachichou [842] the family had already adopted at least one female child. It is commonly believed in the village that the adoption of a female child will increase a woman's chances of bearing a male child, it being said that "the girl will lead a boy into the family." We might say that it is only when a family is convinced that they have exhausted both natural and supernatural means that they finally turn to buying a male child. In terms of their alternatives for insuring their future, the family is then in a position of having to adopt a son or arrange a matrilocal marriage for a daughter. When faced with these alternatives some families which can afford to do so run the risk of buying a son, but never before. The only exceptions are those very few cases in which a family is able to adopt a son from an agnate, and the occasional unusual case such as the young man who received a son in adoption as payment for having allowed a sīm-pūà to marry out of the family.

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178 The adoption of male children by families living in Hsiachichou is thus very rare. The adoption of female children, on the other hand, is surprisingly common. While only 4 (4 percent) of 112 boys born before 1930 and raised in Hsiachichou were adopted sons, we find that the girls raised in the village before 1930 included more adopted daughters than daughters. Of 113 girls born before 1930 and raised by families living in Hsiachichou 80 (71 percent) were adopted daughters. In more

*597 *562 178 recent years the rate of female adoption has dropped considerably, but it still remains much higher than the rate of male adoption. Among 144 boys born after 1930 and raised in Hsiachichou we find only 4 (3 percent) were adopted sons, while by comparison we find that of 160 village girls born during the same period of time 38 (24 percent) were adopted daughters.

*597 When asked why they had adopted female children village informants gave a variety of explanations. One village mother told us she had adopted one of her daughters simply because she was fond of the child, and as best we can judge this probably was her primary reason for the adoption. The woman was reputed to be particularly fond of children, and as she had been the child's wet nurse she had had a chance to become attached to her. In several other instances the reasons for adoption seem to have been loneliness and a fear of isolation on the part of elderly women. One woman told us that she had adopted a girl in her old age because all of her own children had grown up "and it was [777] so quiet and dull around the house." We were also told that two families had adopted girls "in order to change the family's fortune" after several of their own children had died, it being generally believed that the adoption of a female child will somehow insure the good health of a family's later born children. But while these and a multitude of other considerations undoubtedly play a part in decisions about female adoption, the reports of the villagers and certain regularities in the timing of their decisions indicate that most adoptions are the result of one or more of three salient considerations.

*591 The first andmost important of these considerations we have already discussed in the last two chapters. In the early decades of this century many families adopted a female child as a means of obtaining a wife for one of their sons. By adopting a girl and raising her themselves they could save the expense of the preferred form of marriage, and in introducing the girl into the family at an early age they could often avoid the tensions characteristic of the family created by the more formal marriage. But while there can be no doubt that many adoptions were motivated by the advantages of this alternative to the preferred marriage, it is also clear that this was not the only important reason for adopting female children. Our genealogies include 44 cases of adoptions by families which did not as yet have any male children. Since most families will not consider the marriage of an adopted daughter with one of her younger brothers, these adoptions were obviously not undertaken because of the advantage of one form of marriage over the other. In one case a family did arrange the marriage of an older girl with a later born son, but in every other case a second daughter was adopted if the family wanted to raise a wife for a younger son.

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[591] The most obvious reason for a childless family's adopting a female child is to use her as a means ofbringing a son-in-law into the family. Any form of patrilocal marriage is always preferred to any form of matrilocal marriage, but descendants obtained through a matrilocal marriage are better than no descendants at all. A family which does not see much hope of bearing children of their own may therefore adopt a girl as the only means of perpetuating their line. They would usually prefer

*597 *583 to adopt a son, but this is often impossible because of the expense. If they are poor and cannot find an agnate willing to give them a boy, they must be satisfied with a daughter and the hope that they will be able to find a good man willing to marry into their family.

*597 842 When a woman has been married a number of years and not yet borne children and her husband's family then adopts a female child we can be fairly confident that the adoption was made with a matrilocal marriage in mind. But what if the woman has only been married two or three years at the time of the adoption? We find at least 19 women who adopted a female child within the first five years of marriage, and in 8 of these cases the women had been married less than two years. A matrilocal marriage is usually undertaken only as a last resort, and a couple who have been only recently married should not be ready to turn to last resorts. It is likely that they will bear children of their own, and if not they may still be able to arrange to adopt a son. In either case the adoption will not only have been pointless, but will also prove a costly loss to the family. They will then have to marry the adopted daughter out of the family, wasting both the cost of raising her and the expense of her marriage. That we find such a large number of adoptions by women married no more than a few years would seem to indicate that there is some other function which an adopted daughter may play.

Given the normal family cycle, a man's parents will usually be in their mid-forties by the time their sons marry, a stage in life at which they will have begun to think of their grandchildren. It is the joy of every elderly person to have many grandchildren about him in his

* 597 declining years, and it is of the utmost importance for a person to see
842 that he will have many sons and grandsons to take him to the mountain
when he dies. If, then, the son's wife does not become pregnant within
the first year or two of marriage, her husband's parents begin to fear
that the girl is barren. Her failure to show signs of pregnancy at the
earliest possible time is also inevitably noticed by the family's
neighbors, and someone is certain to suggest that this is a punishment
visited upon the family for some former misdeed. Such gossip naturally
arouses the husband's parents, and further exacerbates their own
worries about their daughter-in-law's fertility. The man's mother then
begins to chide her daughter-in-law who is already anxious for her own
reasons. The result is a state of tension which grows in intensity as
the months pass. If it is true that anxiety about fertility serves to
make conception less likely, as psychiatric studies have suggested, the
chances of the daughter-in-law's bearing children decline as the tension
and anxiety around her increase.

842 If after eighteen or twenty months the girl is still not showing
755 the signs of pregnancy, the family will often consult a shaman or
fortune teller. Human fertility is thought of in Hsiachichou in terms
of an arboreal analogy. Every woman has a tree with a number of red
and white blossoms, the white blossoms representing the number of female
children she will bear, and the red the number of male children. Should
a woman fail to conceive and bear children it is probably because the
tree is dying, the buds withering before they can come to blossom.
[775] There can be various reasons for this. It may be that the tree is

842 unhealthy as a result of a lack of nourishment, or it may be that the
755 tree is being attacked by some kind of ghost. If these baneful
775 influences can be counteracted, the tree will flourish and the woman will be fruitful. The remedy in the case of an unhealthy tree is usually to prescribe herbal medicines for the woman, while ghosts are more often dealt with by means of rituals intended to elicit the aid of a benevolent
842 supernatural. One thus finds that the young married woman spends a
755 great deal of time and money seeking the proper herb and the intervention of potent deities. In observing the activities of a local shaman over several months we noted that only physical illness outranked worries about fertility as a reason for a person's seeking his services.

*597 If a family tries these various herbal and ritual remedies and
755 their daughter-in-law still does not conceive, a shaman or fortune
842 teller may suggest that they adopt a daughter. As we have already mentioned, it is commonly believed that the adoption of a female child will stimulate a pregnancy. How the villagers rationalize this belief in terms of their own conceptions of physiology and fate we were never able to discover; they simply say that "the girl will lead a boy into the family." But whatever the rationalization, the belief is held with the greatest confidence. Even our more sophisticated informants agreed that the adoption of a female child will improve a woman's chances of bearing a male child. The reason for this confidence is not hard to see. Of a total of 27 village women who adopted their first child 19 (70 percent) did later bear children. One reason for these favorable

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755 results may be that the adoption serves to alleviate the anxiety which is partially responsible for the woman's failure to conceive. At least this has been suggested by several studies of adoption and fertility in this country. What is more likely in the case of Hsiachichou, however, is that most of these adoptions occurred before the woman had really tested her ability to conceive. Most village wives are strong healthy young women, and given time they conceive and bear children. While most adoptions do therefore lead to the eventual birth of a child, it is not always for the reason suggested by the shaman. Shamans and psychiatrists share the good fortune of practicing an art in which it is often difficult to separate the results of their good works from the effects of time and patience.

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842 It would thus seem reasonable to assume that many adoptions by childless families were motivated more by anxiety about barrenness than by the intent to arrange a matrilocal marriage. The importance of children in the society gives us reason to assume that any childless couple will be anxious about the fact, and this assumption is confirmed by the amount of money and time spent on ritual and medicinal cures for barrenness. Given then that one of the cures in which most villagers have the greatest confidence involves the adoption of a female child, it would seem reasonable to conclude that many adoptions by childless couples were undertaken in the hope of stimulating a pregnancy. Several village families told us that this was their primary reason for adopting a child, and the timing of the adoptions seems to indicate that similar motives were responsible in a number of other cases. While

*597 there is little reason for a family to adopt a child so soon if they
842 are thinking of using her as a means of bringing a son-in-law into the
family, there is every reason to do so if they believe that she can
"lead a son into the family." Such confidence is placed in the be-
lief that a number of village families actually adopted two or three
female children before finally giving up hope that their daughter-in-
[606] law would bear them a son. It is also interesting to note that in
several cases such adoptions were arranged by a mother-in-law despite
the fact that her daughter-in-law was not in favor of the idea.
Apparently it is believed that the good effects of such an adoption
can be conveyed to a woman regardless of her desire in the matter. *562

*597 We have seen in an earlier chapter that a family's decision about
*592 the fate of their own female children is in large part a function of
182 the composition of the family. If the analysis we have presented above
is correct, the same should be true of a family's decision to adopt a
female child. We have argued that there are three reasons for a
family's adopting a female child. They might adopt a girl to raise
as a wife for a son, as a potential means of bringing a son-in-law into
the family, or as a way of improving their own chances of bearing a male
child. We should therefore expect to find a very high rate of adoption
among families with no children and families with male children, but
a low rate of adoption among families with at least one female child
but as yet no sons. A childless family would have reason to adopt
a girl in the hope that in one way or another she would bring a male into
the family, and a family with male children might want to adopt a girl

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to raise as a wife for one of their sons. The family with at least one female child and no sons, on the other hand, would not have any reason to adopt a daughter. Their own daughter would be evidence of the wife's fertility as well as insurance against the possibility of her not bearing sons, and there would obviously be no reason for them to adopt a wife for sons which they do not as yet possess.

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When we test these hypotheses by comparing families of varying composition in terms of the relative number of girls born and girls adopted, the results provide a surprisingly good confirmation of our argument. In the period before 1930 when all three of these motives were still operating we find strikingly different rates of adoption among the three types of families. Of a total of 46 female children who were either born into or adopted into village families without children 26 (57 percent) entered by way of adoption, and of 74 girls who entered village families with at least one male child 35 (49 percent) came by way of adoption. By contrast with these very high rates of adoption we find the expected low rate of adoption among families with at least one female child but as yet no male children. Of 16 girls born or adopted into families of this type only 2 (12 percent) were adopted. *[584] It would thus seem that most adoptions during this period were made either as a means of bringing a male into the family or as a means of obtaining a wife for a son.

The picture in the years after 1930 is somewhat different. We still find a very high rate of adoption by childless families, and a low rate of adoption by families with female but no male children. Of

*597 48 girls entering childless families 18 (38 percent) entered by way of
*562 adoption, and of 27 girls entering families with female children but as
178 yet no sons 2 (7 percent) came by way of adoption. The difference is
that we now find a relatively low rate of adoption among families with
male children. Of a total of 103 girls entering families with at least
one male child 12 (12 percent) entered by way of adoption, and 8 of
*[584] these were girls who were adopted before 1940. Adoptions by families
with male children were almost always for the purpose of obtaining a
wife for one of their sons, and such adoptions became pointless once
it was apparent that very few of them would culminate in a marriage.
The rate of adoption among childless families remains high because
while there is no point in adopting a girl to raise as a daughter-in-law, it is as important as ever for families to have sons and to make
some other provision for the perpetuation of the family if they do not.

*597 842 Whether or not a family adopts their first child depends primarily on how long it is after marriage that the wife becomes pregnant. The sooner she demonstrates her fertility, the less likely the family is to adopt a daughter. There is, however, one other variable. A family is somewhat more likely to adopt a daughter for the wife of a first born son than for the wife of a later-born son. Whereas we find among 54 first born sons 16 (30 percent) whose first child is an adopted daughter, we find only 6 (17 percent) adopted daughters among the eldest children of 36 later born sons. The reason is simply that the husband's parents are more concerned about a daughter-in-law's fertility before they have grandchildren than after they have grandchildren.

*597 842 They therefore begin to press the wife of a first born son to adopt a daughter much sooner than they do in the case of the wife of a later born son.

*597 *562 858 181 We have now seen some of the considerations which may cause a family to give away its own children in adoption, and we have also isolated some of the factors which may influence a family to adopt a child. Before turning to our next topic it is worthwhile to pause for a moment to consider the total effect of these considerations upon the flow of male and female children between families. As a consequence of the preference for patrilineal descent and patrilocal marriage, males are highly valued and have a universal utility. It is important for a family to have male children to inherit their property and perpetuate their line, and a male child may play this role in either his natal family or in a foster family. The result is a great demand for male children and at the same time a low rate of male adoption. Many families which do not have sons of their own would like to adopt a male child, but the high value placed upon male children makes this difficult. Relatives are unwilling to surrender their own heirs and descendants and those who are willing to sell male children can ask a price which many families cannot afford. The situation of the male child is thus very much like that of a scarce commodity in a market economy. Insofar as males do change hands, they pass from those who have to sell them to those who can afford to buy them, but most people do not participate in the exchange at all. The great majority of those who want male children cannot afford to buy them, and most of those who have male children are unwilling to sell them.

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Because of the incest taboo and the preference for patriliny, the situation is very different in the case of female children. While male children have a universal value, the value of a female child varies with her situation. She is usually of little value to the family into which she is born, but she may be of considerable value to a family which adopts her. To her natal family she is "something to lose money on," but to a potential foster family she is the means of achieving the goal of genealogical continuity. The result is that while there is a one way flow of male children from those who have to sell them to those who can afford to buy them, there is a generalized exchange of female children. Families who have female children gladly give them away in adoption, and at the same time they are glad to adopt female children from other families. Most families participate in the system as both givers and takers because they have no use for their own girls and do have uses for the girls of others. The only exceptions result from the possibilities created by the institution of matrilocal marriage. When a family has no sons this institution allows them to substitute a daughter for a son, and as a result they do not give away their own daughters or adopt daughters from others. The possibility of a matrilocal marriage makes some female children the equivalent of male children and thereby precludes their entrance into the system of exchange.

CHAPTER 12

MATRILOCAL MARRIAGE

+591 +592 Most decisions about adoption are made during the extended phase of the normal family cycle. When sons marry they remain living with their parents and their married brothers, and it is during the next few years that most of their children are born and their fates decided. It is also during these years that the family is most likely to adopt a daughter to raise as a wife for one of their male children or as a means of bringing a son into the family. During the following stem phase of the family cycle, the membership of most households remains stable. Most of the family's children are too old to be given in adopttion and too young yet to marry. The next period of crucial decisions is not usually reached until the death of the grandparents has reduced the household to a nuclear family. The children are then old enough to marry, and decisions must be made as to how they are going to marry. Marriages may be arranged which add to the family roster, or the young people may be married out of the family to become members of other households. Having already seen something of decisions which families make about adoption during the early phase of the cycle, our next task will be to consider decisions about the marriages of a family's young adult members.

581 A few men and women born in the village of Hsiachichou never marry, but this is usually the result of unforeseen circumstances rather than a family decision.

000 *583 591 family decision. The decisions which concern most families are how their children are to marry, not whether or not they should marry. Decisions about the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage must be made early in the family cycle, and so the alternatives at this point are the preferred form of marriage and some form of matrilocal marriage. A daughter may be married out of the family in the preferred way, or she may be used to bring a son-in-law into the family by means of a matrilocal marriage. A son may either be retained as a member of his natal family by means of the preferred marriage, or he may be allowed to marry out of the family to become a member of his wife's household. Since the decisions which many families make about the marriages of their daughters depend in large part upon the availability of men willing to make matrilocal marriages, we will begin our analysis with a discussion of some of the considerations which make men more or less willing to marry into a woman's family.

*583 591 588 As is the case in China generally, Hokkien men are usually reluctant to make a matrilocal marriage. According to an informant who had himself married matrilocally, one reason is that "no one ever respects a man who marries into his wife's family." Since a man's primary duty to his parents is to provide them with descendants and to support them in their old age, the man who makes a matrilocal marriage is often accused of being unfilial. Also, there is the widespread assumption that a man who makes such a marriage must be poor. A matrilocal marriage is one way in which a poor man can obtain a wife without paying a bride price, and so it is easily said of any man who makes such a marriage

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591 558 that "he couldn't even afford a bride price." Even if a man's parents are dead or living with one of his brothers and he is himself obviously capable of earning a living, he still cannot entirely avoid the onus of having married into his wife's family. It is generally understood that a man loses face by making a matrilocal marriage, and the man who makes such a marriage may therefore always be accused of "not caring about face." As is so often the case with stereotypes, this one is self-perpetuating. The very fact that a man makes a matrilocal marriage is sufficient proof that he is "just the kind of man who would marry into his wife's family."

*583 591 606 602 578 Another reason many men give for reluctance to marry matrilocally is the difficult position they would occupy in their wife's family. The man who makes a matrilocal marriage is often treated by his wife's relatives as though his status were closer to that of a child than an adult male. He is expected to defer to them in all matters, and he may be reprimanded and criticized without regard to his status. This was particularly noticeable in the case of a man by the name of Ong Bun-iek who had married into the family of a former prostitute who already had several illegitimate children at the time of their marriage. Living in a large compound in which he was surrounded by his wife's relatives, Ong Bun-iek was forever subjected to overweening authority. One day while we were talking to him one of his wife's children complained that he had given him less rice than he had given to his own children. Ong Bun-iek scolded the child, and when the boy wouldn't stop complaining, hit him. Ong Bun-iek's wife's father's

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591 younger brother happened to be in the room and said something to the
606 effect that Ong Bun-iek was "always favoring his own children."
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578 Ong Bun-iek denied this whereupon the other man threw a package of ginger in his face, precipitating a fight which ended with both men wrestling on the floor of the kitchen. Although other members of the several families living in the house were quick enough in interfering to stop the fight, we noticed that there was no sympathy whatsoever for Ong Bun-iek's viewpoint. As one of his wife's relatives explained to us sometime later, "That man is always telling other people what to do even though he married into his wife's family and should be watching other people's faces."

*583 Should a man who has married matrilocally lose his ability to
591 earn a living, his wife's relatives may even go so far as to force him
602 out of the family. A matrilocal marriage seems to be an almost ex-
606 clusively contractual relationship which does not create the broader social obligations characteristic of a patrilocal marriage. It is undertaken by the woman's parents with certain specific expectations in mind, and if these are not fulfilled the family does not feel any obligation toward the man who entered into such a contract. We know of at least two instances in which a woman's parents forced her husband out of the family because he was no longer making what they considered
[348] an adequate contribution to the family income. In one case the family had at first been unable to find a man willing to make a matrilocal marriage, and as a result had been forced to send their daughter out to work as a prostitute. A few years later she met a man who had a

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good job as a goldsmith in a local town, and when he seemed willing to make a matrilocal marriage the parents were happy to welcome the man into the family as a son-in-law. For a number of years these arrangements apparently worked well enough for both parties, but then in the sixth or seventh year of the marriage the man lost his job. Unable to find another job as a goldsmith, he tried to make a living peddling candies and toys and other small commodities, but he was apparently too old and too unaccustomed to the work to make any of these ventures pay. His wife's relatives then began to criticize him unmercifully until at last he simply took his two children and disappeared. Far from being distressed about this result, the wife's parents seemed to be relieved. According to her mother,

> "It is better not to get married than to marry this kind of a man. Everyone says that a woman will have an easier life after she gets married, but if you marry a man like this you have to grind harder than ever. That man! The first thing he said when he lost his job was that he was going to sell sweet rice, and so I bought all of the things for him, but when he went out he always brought all of the cakes home. Then he said he was going to sell pig's blood, and he worked for one day doing that. Then he tried to sell balloons and other things for children, but he couldn't make a success of that either. He always brought them all home with him. I didn't have any more money for him to try anything else. His wife said, 'Let's go gather rocks', but he said that it was too hard a kind of work for him and wouldn't go. Then he went out to buy junk, but he still just lost money for us. No one was willing to give him any more money after that, and so he just sat home. That's all. That kind of man! He had to let his wife go out and make money to feed him. Can you still call such a creature a man? When he went out to sell things he just sat there like he was dead and didn't call out to people. Of course he didn't sell anything. And just think of what he looks like. As soon as they took one look at him people wouldn't buy anything from him. And when we said a few words to him about it, he turned it around and said we were trying to get rid of him and that that was why we said things to him."

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In the other case the husband was a younger man who was variously employed as a coal miner and coolie. Unfortunately, his work was sporadic, and he was also an addicted gambler. According to his wife's parents, "He spent all his money gambling and buying presents for his girlfriends." This was certainly not literally true, nor is it unusual for village men to spend a great deal of money gambling, but the wife's parents thought it sufficient excuse to be rid of the man. [illegible] A few years after the woman's younger brother married, the family simply locked her husband out of the house, and with the support of their relatives resisted his efforts to recover even the one child who had taken his surname. He offered the family NT$3000 to let him take his wife and children with him, but the family refused to even consider the offer. [463] Although we are not at all certain of this, it was rumored in the village that the wife was living with another man for whom she was ostensibly working as a cook. The interpretation of several of the family's neighbors was that they wanted to get rid of the husband in order to arrange a marriage with their daughter's "friend". As one of the more sarcastic neighbors put it, "If she is working as a cook, she must be working all night. She's pregnant." Something of the family's attitude towards the situation is apparent in the following conversation between the wife's mother and several of her neighbors.

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> Mother: "Yesterday that man came again and said they were his children and carried his name, and so he wanted to take them home to live with him. I told him that if he wanted to take the children he had better go to the law courts. I said, 'I won't let you take them away that easily.' He doesn't really want the children. He just wants to take my daughter away. How could she be so good as to go with someone she doesn't even like?"

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1st Neighbor: "If he really wants a divorce, just let him come over here and put his chop on the registration card. Why go to all the trouble of a law court? Each of you can have one child. You give him the older one because he is easier to take care of, and you keep the little one for yourself."

2nd Neighbor: "Yes, don't go into the law courts and get all that trouble for yourself. And definitely don't let him take the little one with him. If you let him take the little one, you will have to have a coffin ready because he won't know how to take care of a sick baby. How would you know whether he would take good care of the child or not?"

1st Neighbor: "Oh, he would take good care of both of them. You can see how much he likes them from the way he acts when he comes here."

Mother: "I don't worry too much about his taking care of them. He really likes them very much, and his older brother's wife likes children too. It is just that some 'dead' person here went and told him that my daughter brought a boy friend home. How could she do that: She was just playing ma jong with a few friends, that's all. I hope the person who told him'spits blood to death'." [598]

3rd Neighbor: "If he wants the children, just give them to him and get rid of them. It's not so easy to take care of a lot of children. Do you think he likes them so much that he will really take them?"

Mother: "Well, I don't know about that, but I really do like to take care of them. I don't want to give them to him."

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In both of these cases the woman's parents had younger male children, and had arranged a matrilocal marriage only as a way to provide for the family until their sons could assume this responsibility. They were therefore not dependent upon their sons-in-law for support in their old age. When a family does not have any younger sons of their own, they are naturally somewhat more restrained in their treatment of a son-in-law. Also, the fact that his wife does not have any brothers usually makes a

*583 man more tolerant of the treatment he receives from her parents.
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606 So long as he remains a member of the family he and his children will inherit the family property. But even in these somewhat more fortunate circumstances, many men find that they cannot bear the strain of a matrilocal marriage. One young coal miner who married into a village family remained only two months before running away with his wife.
*583 Having only two adopted daughters to depend upon, his wife's mother was
591 furious, even appealing to the gods to help her avenge herself. In her
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578 own words,

> "He was a worthless man who was unwilling to work, and he carried off my daughter even though I treated him very well. After they ran away we looked all through the bamboo groves along the river bank because we thought they might have jumped into the river. I was so good to him and yet he ran away with my daughter, and so I hated him. I asked the gods to let him be crushed to death in a mining accident. A year later when I heard that his shoulder had been broken in an accident I was very happy. But then he
> [782] recovered, and I told the god that if he would let that man be killed I would burn a hundred sticks of incense to him in an open field. Later when my neighbors came and told me that he had been crushed beyond recognition in the mine I was so happy that I laughed and laughed. That was about ten years ago, and after that my daughter went to live with a peddlar. She still lives with him, but I don't see why. He is short and ugly. You would laugh yourself to death just to look at him."

We have no way of knowing now who was primarily responsible for the failure of this particular marriage, but it was apparently not a simple case of the man's having "tricked" the family's daughter away from them. When we asked one of the neighbors why it was that he had run away if his mother-in-law treated him so well we received a caustic question in reply, "If she was so good to him why did they first search the river banks when he and his wife disappeared?"

*583 *593 591 Aside from these various considerations which might make any man reluctant to marry matrilocally, there is also the unwillingness of most parents to see a son marry out of the family. All of the same reasons which make it important for a family to have male children make it equally important that these sons remain in the family. As a result, men who make matrilocal marriages are often men who are not bound by any family claims. The situation of a young villager by the name of Lim Liong-hong is perhaps a good example of the kinds of circumstances which may lead to a man's making a matrilocal marriage. [848] Born as the illegitimate child of an adopted daughter who became a prostitute when her foster parents were unable to arrange a marriage for her, Lim Liong-hong was left for his mother's foster parents to raise when she married and moved to southern Taiwan. Since his foster grandparents had sons and grandsons of their own, they took little interest in Lim Liong-hong, allowing him to govern the course of his own life from the time he graduated from primary school. When we knew him he was living part of the time with his foster grandparents in Hsiachichou, and part of the time with a maternal relative in Panchiao where he was working in a paper mill. According to his grandmother, this family has only one child, an adopted daughter, and "so they treat him very well because they would like to have him marry into the family." She thinks this would be a good thing, and whenever Lim Liong-hong returns to the village she urges him to go back to Panchiao. "I tell him that if he stays there a while maybe he will get used to that girl, and after a

583 while they may like one another and get married. He has no father and
583 really no mother either, and so he doesn't have to worry about burning
591 incense for anyone."

Similar circumstances are evident in a number of cases of matrilocal marriages recorded in our genealogies. In one instance the man was an illegitimate child whose mother later married and bore several more children. Since the boy had been given his mother's maiden name, her marriage left him without any family responsibilities. In another case the man's father died when he was still a child, and his mother remarried, leaving the boy to be raised by his father's older brother. The father's older brother already had sons of his own, and so again the boy did not really have a family identity. A third case involved an illegitimate child whose mother died and whose father already had several sons by his wife. The boy's father's family raised him, but did not take an interest in his marriage because he did not bear their surname. One man who married into a family living in Hsiachichou was a traveling fortune teller who apparently did not have any family or home; another was the elderly goldsmith we have already mentioned who was also without a family; and in several other cases men who married into the village were mainlanders without families on Taiwan. We also know of two cases of matrilocal marriages by men who were the only surviving members of their family, and in one other case the man's only close relative was a *sīm-pûa* whom he preferred not to marry. Although we do not know the background of all of the men in our genealogies who made matrilocal marriages, it would appear that at least half of them were men who had no family ties at the time of their marriage.

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*593 Of the rest, those men who had families and still married matri-
591 locally, almost all were sons of poor families with a number of male
556 children. These were families who could not afford to pay a bride price for all of their sons, and who perhaps also saw some economic advantage in having one of them become an heir in another family. Of 13 such village men 11 had at least one older brother, and 7 had at least one younger brother. Our genealogies include only one case of an only son who made a matrilocal marriage, and this case is unusual in a number of respects. The son of a *sīm-pûà* who was allowed to marry out of her foster family in return for her first born child, the boy was adopted by his mother's foster brother and intended husband. For some reason this man never married, perhaps because he already had a son. At any rate, by the time the adopted son was old enough to marry, he was so poor that he was unable to afford a marriage for him. He had lost much of the family's money in an unfortunate business venture, and was unable to work because of a prolonged illness. He therefore arranged for his son to marry into a woman's family on the condition that the family take the responsibility for supporting him in his old age. Although we know of several cases in which men who married matrilocally brought their mothers to live with them, this is the only case in which a father went to live with his son when the boy married into his wife's family. The villagers themselves thought the arrangement extremely unusual, and they may have been right in suggesting that the father was mentally de-
[445] ranged. He himself told us that he had "died" several times only to be
[446] saved from the agents of the underworld by the god Tu Ti Kung.

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591 Considering the changes which have taken place in Hsiachichou during the course of the past thirty years, one would expect a decrease in the frequency of men making matrilocal marriages. As the village has become somewhat wealthier fewer families should have been forced to let a son marry out because they were unable to afford the price of a wife. In fact, however, there has been very little change in the frequency of matrilocal madriages by village men. Of 50 men born in the years before 1910, 7 (14 percent) made matrilocal marriages, and of 102 men born after 1910, 11 (11 percent) left their natal families by way of a matrilocal marriage. What appears to have happened is that the years since 1930 have produced more men like Lim Liong-hong married into their wife's family simply because they had no family of their own, so that even though there have been fewer men who have married matrilocally for financial reasons the rate of matrilocal marriage has not declined appreciably. So long as most children continue to be raised in large extended families there will probably always be some men willing to make matrilocal marriages. Whatever the disadvantage and dangers of such a marriage, it is preferable to a life of solitude and death in a lonely room without the comfort of relatives.

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581 When a woman marries into her husband's family there is very little possibility that the marriage will not succeed. His parents may repudiate the girl for any one of several reasons, but they seldom do so because of the expenses of obtaining another daughter-in-law. More often it is the daughter-in-law who would like to extricate herself from her husband's family, but this is even less feasible.

000 562 593 591 [464] husband's family, but this is even less feasible. The simple fact of the matter is that there is no place for a married woman to go. She cannot support herself except by becoming a prostitute, and it is unlikely that her natal family will welcome her home. They may give her a place temporarily if she has been quarreling with her husband or her mother-in-law, but her brothers will eventually force her to return to her husband's family. They have their own wives and children to support and cannot afford to care for a sister who contributes nothing to the family's welfare. As one woman in Hsiachichou told us when we asked if a married woman could return to her natal home, "Not many women go back to their parent's home. In fact, you can say that no one ever does that. When you can't get along with your husband's family, then you have to think of a way to make your own living. Your parents can't support you all of your life."

*562 591 The situation is very different when it is the man who marries into his wife's family. With the exception of those few men who change their surnames and become sons of their wife's parents, men who marry matrilocally usually retain some right over such property as their parents may possess. This may be only the right to live in their parent's home, but even this can be important if they cannot manage with their wife's parents. More importantly, even if a man does not have a parental home as a refuge, as is often the case with men who marry matrilocally, a male is at least able to support himself apart from his spouse's family. As a village woman told us, "I don't like girls. It's not good to be a girl. A woman can never earn enough to

*582 feed herself, but a man can always manage to earn at least enough to 591 eat." The woman who cannot get along with her husband's parents has no alternative but "to swallow her anger," but the man who is at odds with his wife's parents can rely upon his own resources. Depending upon his age and his profession, this may be more or less of a hardship, but it is never the hardship that it would be for a woman who left her husband's family.

*583 *593 606 591 We have already seen that the in-law relationship created by the preferred patrilocal marriage is typically one of tension and hostility. Because of a common interest in the man who is the husband of the one and son of the other, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law often become involved in a bitter struggle. What saves the family from being torn asunder by this conflict are the strong ties which bind a son to his parents. Nothing could be clearer than the precept that a man must place his parents' welfare before the interests of his wife. "A man's parents are like his arms and legs; his wife is like his shirt and pants." Although a man may occasionally sympathize with his wife's quarrel with his mother, he would never abandon his parents for the sake of his wife. If she would sever ties with the family she must do it alone, and it is therefore virtually impossible for her to do it at all. The strength of the relationship between parent and child thus serves to balance the potentially disastrous tension between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law.

The situation is again very different in the case of the matrilocal marriage. Here also one finds that a great deal of tension is generated

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by the entrance of an outsider into the family circle, but this tension is not effectively counteracted by the strength of the parent-child relationship. The matrilocal marriage does not create a structure which is a simple inverse of the structure resulting from a patrilocal marriage. The dyadic relationships of the Chinese family are defined in terms of a patrilocal family, so that even when a woman marries matrilocally her husband takes precedence over her parents. As a result, the crucial parent-child relationship is much weaker in a matrilocal marriage than in a patrilocal marriage. While a son would be severely criticized for siding with his wife against his parents, a woman who has married matrilocally may be criticized for siding with her parents. We heard several caustic remarks about a woman who was apparently in the habit of taking her parents' side in their quarrels with her husband. For example,

> "That woman! She already has two children, but she still sides with her father when he and her husband get into an argument. Where else could one find a woman like that? He married into her family, and so her father and mother are always saying things to him, but she always takes her parent's side. It is as though she were just married, and she already has two children.

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The matrilocal marriage is also weakened by personal tensions between the parents and their daughter. Since most families who arrange a matrilocal marriage do so because the wife is barren and has borne no sons, the great majority of women who make such a marriage are adopted daughters. Of 26 women for whom a matrilocal marriage was arranged 20 (77 percent) were adopted daughters. While these women are generally obedient in their relations with their parents, they are nonetheless not as loyal to the family as a son or a daughter. They know that they

*583
*597 are adopted, and they naturally feel some resentment of the treatment
*593 they have received. In the case of the sim-pua marriage this does not
591 matter because the pivotal relationship is that of the son and his parents,
606 but it becomes a weakness in the matrilocal marriage where the adopted
daughter becomes the crucial link. Moreover, whatever resentment a daughter may feel towards her parents is intensified by the fact that they have arranged a matrilocal marriage for her. It is assumed that no good man would ever make such a marriage, and so naturally no woman is ever happy to have to marry in this way. Just as the adopted daughter tends to blame all of the misfortunes of a lifetime on her parents' having given her away, the woman who marries matrilocally characteristically blames her marital dissatisfactions on her parents for having forced her into such a marriage. To cite but one example,

> "To marry this 'dead man' is to 'want to die." He married into my family, I didn't marry into his. I didn't want to marry him, but my foster parents insisted. At that time my father had lost a lot of money in business, and he wanted to marry someone in quickly who would make money. My husband was a coal miner then, and made good money, and so they talked him into marrying into my family. If I could have married the man I wanted to marry, I wouldn't be living this poorly now. That man is doing very well now."

*583 The family created by the matrilocal marriage is thus much more brit-
591 tle than the family resulting from a patrilocal marriage. The tension
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581 inherent in the mother-in-law daughter-in-law relationship is offset in
the case of the patrilocal marriage by the weakness of the daughter-in-law's position and the strong bond between a son and his parents, while in the case of a matrilocal marriage the relatively strong position of the son-in-law and the weak ties between the daughter and her parents little protection from the tensions between the newcomer and his wife's

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parents. As a consequence, a matrilocal marriage is much less likely to succeed than a patrilocal marriage. We do not know of a single case of a daughter-in-law's deserting her husband's family or a son's failing in his obligations to support his parents in their old age. By comparison, we know of at least 8 cases in which matrilocal marriages failed in their original purpose. Aside from the 2 instances in which the parents drove their son-in-law out of the family, our geneologies include 6 cases in which the son-in-law deserted of his own accord. In 3 of these cases the wife remained with her parents, and in 3 cases the husband persuaded his wife to bring the children and leave with him.

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We have already seen that it is "only a man who doesn't care about face" who will marry into his wife's family. Although the point is one which is not ordinarily made in discussions of matrilocal marriage in China, the woman's family does not lose face by arranging such a marriage for their daughter. The marriage does not enhace their status as would a preferred marriage, but neither is it something of which they must be ashamed. What concerns a family considering such a marriage is not what other people will say, but rather the question of the risks involved in such an arrangement. A family is always concerned that their son-in-law will not be a man of good character, for they too assume that no good man is ever willing to make such a marriage. More importantly, they are aware of the fact that such marriages are much less

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stable than patrilocal marriages. The man who is willing to marry into their family may desert them in their old age, and may even manage to "steal" their daughter and their grandchildren. In discussing the role-

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tive merits of the various forms of marriage, we were told, "You can never tell what will happen when a man marries into your family. He may be a good man like Tan Han-cu's son, or he may be a man who is always gambling and running around. Maybe he will work hard for your family, but maybe he will run away with your daughter. You can't depend on it."

We therefore find that it is only when they have no other way of obtaining sons that parents will attempt to arrange a matrilocal marriage for a daughter. Of 26 village girls for whom matrilocal marriages were arranged 16 (62 percent) were daughters whose parents did not have any sons. Their sons had either died before reaching marriageable age, or they had the misfortune of never bearing any male children. In 8 of those 10 cases in which a family did have sons and still arranged a matrilocal marriage for a daughter, the sons were much younger than the daughter. By the time a man's eldest children reach marriageable age, he himself will be approaching an age at which he will no longer be able to support his family. If these older children are girls, he may be forced to bring a son-in-law in to support the family until his own sons are old enough to assume this responsibility. We can therefore say that so long as a family has a son of marriageable age they will almost never arrange a matrilocal marriage for a daughter. The only two exceptions in our genealogies were cases in which the daughter herself initiated the marriage. In one case the marriage was a "love match" in which the man was escaping a marriage with a *sīm-pûà*, and in the other case the daughter was a prostitute who married a man she met

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"at work." The husband himself claims that he did not marry his wife's family even though he is living with her parents in Hsiachichou, but this is probably not true as one of their three children carries his wife's surname.

The matrilocal marriage might therefore be characterized as a last resort. So long as a family has sons who are old enough to marry they allow their daughters to marry in the preferred way, but when they have no sons of marriageable age they have no choice but to arrange a matrilocal marriage for a daughter. While this is a step that is always taken with reluctance, it is important to note that it is also taken with determination. Simply because this is their last resort, parents will not brook any resistance on the part of their daughter. So far as they are concerned the family's future and their own security in old age are at stake, and they are therefore willing to apply whatever pressure is necessary to make a daughter acquiesce. Occasionally it happens that no pressure is necessary. In one happy case a girl whose parents had no sons had the good fortune to be attracted to (and attractive to) a young man who did not have a family of his own. She was happy to marry this particular man under any circumstances, and her parents were delighted to find a man willing to marry into their family. When we asked her if her parents had approved of her choosing her own husband, she answered, smiling, "It isn't easy to find a man willing to marry into his wife's family." More commonly, however, this is not the case. As a result of the stereotype of "the kind of man who would

#583 591 marry into his wife's family," most women are very much opposed to 581 matrilocal marriages. As one young woman told us, "A man like that will never make a good husband."

#584 But while most women are reluctant to make a matrilocal marriage, 591 the opposition is not nearly so intense as that to the sīm-pûà form of 581 marriage. It is more a matter of what they consider a good marriage, less a matter of personal revulsion. Moreover, the parents are in a much stronger position in arranging a matrilocal marriage than a sīm-pûà marriage. In attempting to force a sīm-pûà marriage the parents must deal with their son as well as their daughter, while in the case of a matrilocal marriage they only need be concerned with making a daughter #562 comply. In recent years at least, sons have been able to resist paren- #584 tal pressure because of their potential economic independence, but [464] daughters still cannot threaten with such an alternative. Although there are jobs for young women in textile mills and the drug factory, these do not pay enough to enable her to support herself. It is there- [463] fore much easier for parents to force a daughter to comply. We know of only one case in which a young woman was able to dissuade her parents from their plan for a matrilocal marriage, and this case was exceptional because the girl had a very good job as a clerk in a Taipei bank. When her parents began to talk of a matrilocal marriage, she told them that she couldn't marry because married women were not allowed to work in the bank. When they nonetheless insisted upon her making such a marriage, she used her own wages to adopt a daughter and later a son. She was then able to argue that there was no point in her marrying. She

*562 *584 herself could earn as much money as any man who might be willing to marry into the family, and she had also provided them with a granddaughter and a grandson.

*583 591 581 The decision which a family must make about the matrilocal form of marriage is thus very different from the choice between the two forms of patrilocal marriage. In choosing between the preferred marriage and the _sīm-pûà_ marriage a family decides between two alternative ways of achieving the same goal. Each has its advantages and disadvantages, but either will assure the family of a satisfactory posterity. The matrilocal marriage, on the other hand, is a form of marriage which is always to be avoided if at all possible, but which in certain situations becomes an absolute necessity. Rather than being a case of weighing the relative advantages and disadvantages, the choice sometimes becomes a matter of a family's achieving the goal of continuity or not. A family with sons will allow its daughters to marry out of the family, but a family which does not have sons has no real choice but to marry their
*583 591 581 178 daughters matrilocally. As a result, we find that even though the frequency of _sīm-pûà_ marriages has declined sharply in the last thirty years, the frequency with which families have arranged matrilocal marriages for their daughters has not declined to any appreciable extent. There are families which still fail to produce sons, and there are therefore still families which are forced to arrange matrilocal marriages for their daughters. Of 41 girls born before 1910 and raised in Hsiachichou a total of 8 (19 percent) made matrilocal marriages, and of 100 girls born af-

*583 ter 1910 a total of 17 (17 percent) made matrilocal marriages. Here again we
591 find a demonstration of a point we have made several times already. Although
581 many aspects of marriage and adoption have changed in Hsiachichou
178 in recent years, the basic meaning and values of the family have not
593 changed. When a decision about marriage or adoption involves the possibility
597 of a family's not achieving the goal of genealogical continuity,
58 they make and somehow manage to enforce whatever decision is necessary
181 in order to achieve this goal.

CHAPTER 13

THE EXCEPTIONS

128 183 58 The great majority of the people of Hsiachichou marry young and early in their marriage bear the children who will perpetuate their family line and support them in their old age. Occasionally, however, it happens that a man or woman does not marry, or, more often, that [546] they do not marry until later in life. Also, there have been a number of women in Hsiachichou whose lives have departed from the normal pattern as a result of their having been forced to work as prostitutes. Since the situation of these people is obviously very different from that of the person who married at the normal time, we have thus far largely excluded them from our discussion of marriage and adoption. To fill this lacuna in our analysis, we will consider some of the conditions which create these exceptions. Why do some men and women never marry, and why is it that a number of women work for a time as prostitutes? Secondly, we will look at the decisions these people make about male and female adoption. How often do they adopt children, and what are some of the considerations which enter into their decisions? Finally, we will be interested in the effects of prostitution upon the family. How does the family in which a daughter is forced to work as a prostitute differ from one in which she marries in the normal way? While recognizing that prostitutes and the unmarried constitute exceptions to the villagers' expectations, we will attempt to show that these exceptions follow a regular pattern.

000 to show that these exceptions follow a regular pattern.

589 Of a total of 116 men who grew up as members of Hsiachichou families 8 (7 percent) passed their thirtieth birthday without marrying. Four of these men were either very old or had already died at the time of our study, and four were younger men who might still marry. Two of the younger men were brothers whose parents died when they were quite young. Their father's older brother raised them, but he and his wife also died before the boys were old enough to marry. The oldest boy, according to his neighbors, was sickly as a child, and so "his mother was too good to him and gave him too much tonic and too many good things to eat. That's why he is this way now." "This way" apparently refers to his frequent ill health and his general lack of energy. Although already 34 years old in 1960, he had never looked for work outside the village, spending most of his time helping his brother-in-law who tills the family's small truck garden. The judgment of most of the neighbors is that this man will never marry, but his younger brother probably will. Energetic and hard working, he began to work in the coal mines before he was twenty years old, and had it not been for bad luck would probably not be on our list at all. While working in a mine near Keelung he was engaged to a young woman living in a nearby village, and would have married her had she not run away with another man while he was in the army. Although this caused him a certain amount of embarrassment, it apparently has not discouraged him, for we heard just before we left the village that he was looking for another wife.

539 The four younger men in our genealogies who did not marry all share one characteristic. They are either the offspring of women who never married, or they are men whose fathers died before they reached marriageable age. While we are not sure that this should be labelled the cause of their not marrying, it is undoubtedly an important contributing factor. In none of these cases had the parents adopted a *sīm-pûà*, and so a marriage meant the preferred form of marriage, an expense which a family without an adult male might find difficult to manage. This was suggested to us by a mother who said that she would arrange a marriage for her son if she had the money, "but I don't and so he will just have to make his own life. If he wanted to find a wife he would, but he doesn't so he will just have to make his own way." Her apparent lack of concern is probably due to the fact that she has two other sons who are married. So long as a family has one or two married sons with children they are not as concerned about the marriage of a second or third son, although they would naturally prefer to see him marry. The reason for the unmarried state of one young man may be that when his married brother became ill and lost his job the family could not afford to assume the additional burden of a second daughter-in-law and more children. During the two years we lived in the village they were almost entirely dependent upon the wages the unmarried son earned as a coal miner.

The cases of the four older men who failed to marry involved a variety of circumstances. One is the case we have already mentioned of a man by the name of Ong Hong-chi who obtained an adopted son in

589 return for his foster sister's having been allowed to marry out of the
family. While this was probably not the reason he remained single, it
[158] did at least make it possible. In another case a man was apparently
prevented from marrying by a mental illness. Although he died a
number of years before we came to the village, we were told that he
was slow of mind "and stood shaking his head when you talked to him."
[784] This is said to have been his punishment for making fun of the god Chi
[776] Yeh who is always represented in festival parades as a short black-
[828] faced deity with the habit of continually wagging his head to and fro.
The other two cases involved two brothers whose departure from the
normal pattern was almost certainly due to poverty. Although this
family has lived in Hsiachichou for a number of generations they have
[775] never owned any farm land or even a house site. One of their former
[87] neighbors told us that even though he was first in his class the pre-
sent head of the household was forced to quit school after the fourth
grade "because the family couldn't afford the few dollars a year for
[58] tuition and books." Although the brothers of these two men did manage
to marry, it is significant that one of them had to marry matrilocally.

Of a total of 121 women who grew up in Hsiachichou at least 9
(7 percent) and perhaps 11 (9 percent) did not marry by the time they
588 were thirty years of age. One of the doubtful cases involves a woman
by the name of Tan A-giok who was in her mid-forties in 1960. Accord-
ing to several of our informants, Tan A-giok's parents arranged for a man
to marry into her family, but he didn't stay "because her mother was
always saying things to him. He just couldn't stand it, and so he left

578 and never came back." On the other hand, we heard from several of the family's neighbors that Tan A-giok worked as a prostitute when she was young, and that "they just said that they were married when that man came to live here." Which of these two stories is the best account we cannot say, and it may be that both of them are true. There were several other cases in the village in which prostitution ripened into a matrilocal marriage, and it is quite possible that Tan A-giok later married this man even though this was not his original reason for coming to live with her. The case of a woman by the name of Ong Cui-kim is even more difficult because it involves a disagreement among the villagers themselves as to what constitutes a marriage. Some *[585] feel that Ong Ciu-kim was married because her mother accepted a bride price and because she lived with the man, while others argue that the ceremony was never completed and that "they just lived together." What happened was best described to us by a neighbor:

> "Ong Cui-kim used to live with a man who still lives in Wanhua. They met each other there because she used to work there. Her three children are all his. He told me all about it. He said he used to like another girl from this village, and once in the factory he whistled to attract her attention, but Ong Cui-kim turned around instead. That was the beginning of their friendship. He was going to marry her, and he even bought all of the engagement cakes. Ong Cui-kim was pregnant by then, and her mother only asked for NT$1200 for the bride price. The problem was that Ong Cui-kim was adopted to marry her foster brother and was still registered with the police as his wife. Someone told him that he could get some money too if she married, and so the night before the engagement he went and asked the boy to give him NT$1200 also. The next day when the boy came with the engagement cakes he demanded the money. The boy was angry and refused. He just sold all the cakes right here in the village and very cheaply. Everyone had a good time!

588 After that he came and got Ong Cui-kim to live with him for a few months, but she didn't like her mother-in-law and came back here frequently. All three of her children were born here and not at his house. The last time she came home she just didn't return. The reason was that her mother-in-law loaned her some gold jewelry to wear to a festival in our village. Then the mother-in-law got to thinking that she might run away with the jewelry, so she hurried down here and took it back. Ong Cui-kim would never go back to their house after that."

589 Of the nine women who clearly did not marry by their thirtieth
[132] year one is a deaf mute. Her family has tried to arrange a marriage
for her, but have been unable to find anyone willing to accept such
[584] a girl as a daughter-in-law. Another case is that of Ong A-chiou
who refused to marry her foster brother but remained living with her
foster family anyway. As she is a relatively young woman, she may
595 still marry, although she herself thinks this unlikely. A third case
573 involves a young woman named Ong Chun-mui whose foster parents coerced
589 her into living with a village man who was for a long time the hegemon
of a number of village gangs operating in the Hsulin area. Ong Chun-mui
herself told us that when this man first approached her she was afraid
of him "because he was a well-known gang leader and had many girlfriends,
and I was afraid that he would beat me if I did anything he didn't
like." But her parents were pleased with the prospect of such an
alliance, and eventually asked the man to come and live in their
house. As Ong Chun-mui explained, "He could make very good money, and
[505] he helped our family a lot. He bought a boat for my father so he could
work ferrying people across the river, and during the first year he
lived here he spent a lot of money because both my grandmother and
grandfather died that year and he paid for their funerals." Despite

595 573 589 this inauspicious beginning, the union was apparently as happy as most village marriages. The man was attacked by a rival gang, and when he died from his wounds, Ong Chun-mui was more sincerely upset than the man's own wife. In her words,

> "The first few months after he died I didn't want to go on living. I spent a lot of time then with my foster mother. He was very good to my family, and I lived with him for a long time. I think that this year I will make a tablet and pai-pai to him on Ching Ming Chieh." [769]

589 595 Ng Cng-sueq is another village woman who did not marry. Her eldest child was a girl whom she gave away in adoption, and her three younger children are all sons. The eldest of these three boys was born while she was working as a prostitute in Taipei, and the younger boys were both fathered by an elderly man who has kept her as his mistress for nine or ten years. A wealthy man with a wife and several married sons as well as other mistresses, Ng Cng-sueq's benefactor spends most of his nights in Hsiachichou, usually eating his evening meal with Ng Cng-sueq and her parents and children. Ng Cng-sueq's parents provide the rice and vegetables, and their guest brings the meat. He also gives Ng Cng-sueq NT$1500 a month and buys "lots of candy and other things for the children." What worries Ng Cng-sueq is that this man "is very old now and cannot live very much longer, and I will then have to go out and find another man to support me." [842] In order to prepare for this day Ng Cng-sueq has had a hysterectomy "because no man would be willing to spend a lot of money to support so many children." Her hope is that her present support will live long enough to put her children through school, which he has apparently

595 promised to do. "His own children are very capable and have good jobs,
589 and so if my children had someone to teach them they would do well too.
They come from good stock." A frank intelligent woman with a good
deal of perspective, Ng Cng-sueq was probably telling the truth when
she said that she does not really care what happens to her now. "If
I don't eat well, it doesn't matter. I don't care about myself. I'
[737] just want my children to do well, and then I will have someone to
support me in my old age."

548 The most common cause of a woman's not marrying is her parents'
589 desire to arrange a matrilocal marriage and their inability to do so. When a family has only daughters of marriageable age and cannot find a man willing to make a matrilocal marriage, they often have no choice but to send one of their daughters to work as a prostitute, for this is the only way in which a woman can make a substantial contribution to her family's income. We know of at least three cases in which such a situation was the cause of a woman's remaining unmarried, and this may also have been the case with Ng Cng-sueq. Since her parents' only children are two adopted daughters, they undoubtedly attempted to arrange a matrilocal marriage for at least one of them. That they were unable to do so is not very surprising, however, as the family is so poor that no man would see this as a very attractive match. In order to provide for their most basic needs one of the daughters had to go out to work as a prostitute.

*584 The only other unmarried woman about whom we have any reliable
*597 information is that of Ong Ti-sai. Born into a village family with a
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*584 number of male children, she was given away in adoption as a child, but
*597 later returned to her natal family. Some of the villagers say that she
589 returned because the boy she was adopted to marry died, and others
think that it was because her prospective mother-in-law didn't like
her. Whatever the reason, her natal family accepted her return with
reluctance, and apparently did not feel any responsibility for arranging
her marriage. With three sons to provide wives for, they probably
had little money to spare for a dowry, this being the reason they gave
548 the girl away in the first place. Ong Ti-sai went to work as a prostitute when she was quite young, and has been following this profession all of her life. Although fifty-three years old in 1960, she was still entertaining soldiers in her house. It is interesting to note that while Ong Ti-sai was only one of a number of prostitutes living in the village at this time she was the only one of whom most of the village was critical. The main reason seemed to be that she practiced her profession in the village. Most women who are prostitutes do not make any particular effort to conceal the fact, but they almost always avoid professional activities while in the village, particularly with local men. We once overheard a mother warning her daughter not to become involved with a village man who seemed attracted by her.

> "We are just living here temporarily, so we cannot go around as we please. We have to be good friends with all of the people here. This man has a home and children, and so he cannot afford to run around. Don't pay any attention to whether he has money or not. We can only be his friends. We cannot break up his home. You have to remember that we cannot damage people's relations with other people in the place where we live."

548 Aside from those cases of unmarried women who have worked as
prostitutes, our genealogies also include 10 cases of women who have
married and who have also been prostitutes at one time or another. In
8 of these 10 cases the women were prostitutes before they married, and
in 2 cases married women turned to prostitution when their marriages
591 failed. Those who married after their work in brothels included three
women who married into their husband's family, 4 who married matri-
locally, and one case in which the status of the marriage is somewhat
ambiguous. This last case is interesting because it reveals the
villagers' assumptions about the conditions which result in a matri-
*583 local marriage. After having worked for a number of years in Taipei
591 hotels, a woman by the name of Pe A-hong met and married a wealthy
Cantonese businessman. By the time of her marriage Pe A-hong had
already borne one female child and adopted another. She later bore
her husband two sons and a daughter. Since she was the only child
of her parents and an adopted daughter at that, Pe A-hong's mother
apparently insisted that she could marry only if her husband was
willing to accept financial responsibility for his wife's family. As
a result, the family which settled in Hsiachichou consisted of Pe A-hong
and her husband, her mother, the two daughters who bore her maiden
name, and the three younger children who had all taken their father's
name. Pe A-hong's mother now tells her neighbors that her daughter's
husband married into her family, and with any other family the facts
are such that this would be accepted without question. The man lives
with his wife's parents; he has agreed to take financial responsibility

*583 for his wife's mother; and two of the children bear his wife's family's
591 name. Despite this evidence, however, the marriage is not generally
thought of in Hsiachichou as a matrilocal marriage, the primary reason
[829] being that Pe A-hong's husband has too much money. The attitude of
the villagers is that no man who was wealthy would marry into his
wife's family, and this must be simply a case in which a man has let
his wife's mother come to live with him and his family.

548 One of the two girls who became prostitutes when their marriages
[586] failed was a young woman who had married matrilocally. When her
husband deserted her after quarreling with her parents, she was forced
548 to work in order to support the family. The second case involved a
*597 woman by the name of Lim Li-kui whose history is one of the most
complex in our genealogies. Born into a family living in the market
town of Panchiao, Lim Li-kui was adopted by an Ong family in Hsiachichou when she was three or four years old. Why the Ong family adopted
her is not entirely clear. They already had female children of their
[761] own, and they had adopted *sīm-pûà* for both of their sons. It is
possible that the family had a third son who died in childhood, and
that we missed him in collecting our genealogies because of their
reluctance to discuss the death. At any rate, when Lim Li-kui was
nine or ten years old the family decided that they had made a
mistake in adopting the girl, and "sold" her to a Lim family living
in the town of Chungli. This family adopted the girl to marry her to
548 their eldest son, but Lim Li-kui and the boy "didn't get along and so
*593 she married out of the family." This marriage turned out to be no
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548 more to her liking than the one she avoided by marrying out, however,
[586] and after only a year or two "she decided that she didn't like her husband and left." It was at this point that Lim Li-kui became a prostitute, evidently unable to find any other way to support herself. We heard from several people that she made a second transient marriage, although this may have been nothing more than a particularly faithful customer. All we know for a fact is that she bore a number of children, and that she adopted at least one daughter. It is curious that even though Lim Li-kui has been a member of at least four families during her life, it is always to her first foster family that she returns when she is in need of help. One of the women of the Ong family told us that she returned to Hsiachichou "whenever she had a fight with a man she was living with," and we know from various reports that the eldest of her two surviving daughters was largely raised by the Ong family.

548 Beyond those cases we have already mentioned, there were also 6 younger women in Hsiachichou who had worked or were still working as prostitutes. The total number of prostitutes in our genealogies is thus surprisingly large. Of 131 women of twenty years of age or more who spent the majority of their childhood as members of families living in Hsiachichou at least 25 (19 percent) have worked for some period of time as prostitutes. Moreover, in 1960 there were at least three girls of less than twenty years who were then employed as "dark room girls,"
*[593] to use the village euphemism. The conditions which predict a woman's
*[562] becoming a prostitute become apparent when we look at their family

548 status. Nowhere in our genealogies do we find a prostitute who had
*593 an older brother and who grew up in her natal home. Twenty (71 per-
*562
*[597] cent) of the 28 prostitutes were adopted daughters, and 23 (82 percent)
did not have older brothers. Every one of the 28 prostitutes in Hsia-
chichou was either an adopted daughter or a daughter who had no older
brother. The reasons for this are simple, although somewhat difficult
to state concisely. A woman may become a prostitute for one of two
reasons: either her family must depend on her for a substantial part
of their income, or she must support herself independent of a family.
Since it is ordinarily only when a family does not have adult sons
that they need to depend upon a daughter, girls who become prostiutes
*[583] for the first reason seldom have older brothers. Although we shall
note some exceptions later, these are usually girls for whom their
parents have attempted to arrange a matrilocal marriage and failed.
*[597] Aside from their not having older brothers, girls in this situation are
also usually adopted daughters. The family which does not have adult
sons is likely to be a family in which the wife is barren or one in
which she has only borne male children later in life, and in either
case the family is more likely to have adopted daughters than natural
*[584] born daughters. Girls who become prostitutes for the second reason
are less common, and are almost all sīm-pūa who have left their
foster families in order to avoid marrying a foster brother. While
they do therefore always have brothers, they are also always adopted
daughters.

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589 604 *597 769 Ong Hong-chi did not have to marry because he had the son given to him by his foster sister as a forfeit for marrying out of the family. His is an exceptional case, however. For most people remaining unmarried creates a very real problem. They must somehow provide for their old age and for their security in the next world. For men the most common solution is to attach themselves to a married brother's family, contributing their income to the support of their nieces and nephews. These children are then obliged to their father's brother in much the same way as they are to their father and will support him in his old age. This is the situation of the three unmarried elderly men who had no children, and, if they do not marry, the four younger *[592] men we have discussed will probably follow the same pattern. When we knew them in 1960 they were each included in the *kê* of a married sibling and contributed a large share of their income to that *kê*. The afterlife of these men is usually provided for by giving them a brother's child in nominal adoption. This child is then under ritual obligation to his foster father, and is expected to designate one of his own descendants to carry on the truncated line. If an unmarried man's brothers cannot spare a male child, he may be given a girl, in which case the girl is in the same position as any other only child and must make a matrilocal marriage that will allow her to fulfill her obligations to her foster father. This is what happened in the case of the man who did not marry because of a mental handicap. Unfortunately, the girl's husband later deserted her, and she was forced into prostitution in order to support herself and her children.

*593 The situation of the woman who does not marry is very different.
*562 *597 Although it does not take the form of an explicit principle, it would
589 seem that a woman's brother has no obligation to support her if she
769 fails to marry. Perhaps this is because she cannot make the same kind
of contribution to his family as could a man, or perhaps it is simply
that brother and sister are not generally under the same obligation as
[604] brothers. Whatever the reason, we do not know of a single case in
which an unmarried woman was supported in her old age by a brother or
a brother's child, nor do we know of a single instance in which a child
was given in adoption to a woman who had died without descendants. The
woman who fails to marry must provide for her own security in this world
and the next. As a result, those women who do not marry will usually
adopt children as the only means available for them to provide for their
future. Of the 11 unmarried women in our genealogies 7 (64 percent)
adopted at least one child, and 4 (36 percent) adopted two or more
children. The four women who did not adopt include Ng Cng-sueq who
bore three sons, and one other woman who bore a son and a daughter.
The two women who have neither borne nor adopted children are both
young and may still either marry or adopt. To provide for their
future they must do one or the other.

548 What is true of those women who do not marry is also generally
*597 true of all women who work at one time or another as prostitutes.
Although many prostitutes later marry, not all do. It is therefore
very common for these women to adopt a female child who will be able
to support them in the same profession should they not be able to find

*597 548 husbands. Our genealogies include 24 women who by 1960 had worked as prostiutes for at least three years and about whom we have adequate information. Of these 24 women 12 (50 percent) had adopted their first child, and 14 (58 percent) of the 24 adopted at least one girl before bearing a male child. The importance of female children to women who become prostitutes can best be demonstrated by comparing the number of girls they adopt with the number they give away in adoption. Married women give away as many female children as they adopt, but prostitutes tend to hoard female children. Although between them they had borne a total of 23 female children, these 24 women gave only three of their girls in adoption, and at the same time adopted a total of 18 more female children. They adopted five times as many girls as they gave away, collecting a total of 38 female children. Their motive for adopting these girls is suggested by the fact that 6 of the village women who became prostitutes were the adopted daughters of women who were themselves prostitutes.

*597 582 548 The circumstances which lead these women to adopt a daughter can be illustrated by the case of Lim A-sui, daughter of Lim Li-kui. After working as a prostitute for a number of years in Tainan, Lim Li-kui sent her eldest daughter to work in one of the city's best known brothels. Lim A-sui was then sixteen years old. A slim attractive girl, she caught the attention of the son of a wealthy Tainan family who wanted to marry her. The boy feared that his father would discover his prospective fiancee's occupation, and moved her and her family back to Hsiachichou where they lived for a time with Lim Li-kui's first foster

*597 582 548 family. During the first nine months Lim A-sui's friend made several visits to the village and each month sent a substantial allowance, but after a while the boy admitted that it was going to be difficult for them to marry. He said that his father would not allow him to marry until his older brother married, which may very well have been true since such an order of marriage is desirable among respectable families. Lim A-sui was under considerable pressure from her mother at the time to return to work, the boy friend's allowance not stretching far enough to cover her gambling debts. Discouraged about her prospects for a normal future, and after a particularly violent quarrel with her mother, Lim A-sui disappeared, telling some of the neighbors she was going to commit suicide. Fortunately, she phoned her boy friend who was able to dissuade her by renewing his promise of marriage. When after several months his visits became sporadic and her mother's demands more adamant, Lim A-sui finally decided that she would never be able to marry and adopted a daughter. For her, it was an act of resignation, an admission that she would have to provide her own support when she was too old to work. As one of the village women explained in discussing the adoption, "What else could she do? That kind of woman has to have someone who will take care of her later."

*593 548 Occasionally, a young woman whose parents do not have any adult sons "to lean on" will voluntarily become a prostitute. At least one such case developed while we were in Hsiachichou when a young woman who had five younger siblings took a job in an army brothel after her father, a coolie, broke his leg. Although at first we were skeptical

*593 about just how voluntary her actions were, even the most malicious of
548 the village gossips agreed that it had been the girl's own idea, some
of them even praising her for being so filial. More commonly, however,
a girl is both reluctant and frightened at such a prospect, and the
+593 parents have to use no small amount of coercion. We know of one case
548 in which the parents resorted to magical techniques to get a parti-
789 cularly intransigent daughter to agree to their plans. Unfortunately,
from their point of view, the girl discovered that the parents were
"doing something," and so the magic did not work, the discovery itself
being enough to counteract its effects. As the girl explained a few
days later, "The day after I ate those things I began to menstruate
+593 and then I knew that something was wrong." More often, however, the
548 means employed are nothing more exotic than extreme social pressure.
626 The girl is reminded of her obligations to her parents for raising
her; she is made to feel responsible for the family's low standard of
living; and, if necessary, she may be threatened with expulsion from
the k̂e. The following account by a neighbor of the family reveals
something of the pressures brought to bear on two sisters whose parents
were determined that they "do something to help the family."

> "When that girl was fourteen years old her father made her go to work as a prostitute. He didn't like to work himself, and his wife worked very hard to make a living by raising a few vegetables and gathering rocks for a construction company. He made the oldest girl go to work as a prostitute because the family was large and very poor, and because the sons were all too young to work. For a while she cried every time she returned home. Later she gained a reputation as the most beautiful (the 'reddest') girl in the Peitov hotel. During this time the family lived very well, with new clothes and lots of good food to eat. Because one

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> girl made so much money the mother decided to send the family's adopted daughter to do the same work. She did not want to, go, but when she refused the family was very angry and wouldn't talk to her. Finally the older sister said, 'I'm a real daughter of this family, and I went to work. You are only an adopted daughter, so why can't you come to work?' The mother later told everyone that the girl wanted to go to work when she saw how much money her sister could make, but we all knew that this wasn't true. That second girl now has an illegitimate child, but she never has been able to make very much money. After a while the older girl found a man who wanted to marry her, but her mother was a very stupid selfish woman and wouldn't let her do it. Now she is poor and unhappy, and it is all her own fault. After the older girl bore her first child she began to lose her looks and earned less and less money every year. She had a child every year after that until now she has four children. She moved away from the Peitou hotels after her first child was born because she was embarrassed about how she had changed. That old lady is very poor now because of her selfishness."

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Because their parents have forced them to abandon any hope of a normal life, most girls who are prostitutes have a very different relationship with their parents than do other daughters. While it would be rare for most daughters to criticize their parents let alone quarrel with them, open quarrels are not uncommon in families in which a daughter has become a prostitute at her parents' insistence. When the mother of the history quoted above finally relented and told her oldest daughter that she could marry, the girl is reported to have replied, "No, I'll just go on working. Then when I'm too ugly, you can work and support me." We also heard from several people that these two girls treated their mother "more like a servant than their mother," and on at least two occasions the mother threatened to commit suicide because of her daughters' treatment. The case we knew best, however, is that of Lim Li-kui and her daughter, Lim A-sui, as we lived in the

*593 548 578 home of Lim Li-kui's foster family. Violent quarrels between the two women were the rule rather than the exception, and while Lim Li-kui was often at fault her daughter's responses would not have been tolerated in another family. *593 548 578 525 Once when the daughter found that her mother had lost more than seven dollars in two days' gambling she insisted that her mother give her the remainder of the family's money for safe keeping. Always a sharp tempered woman, Lim Li-kui answered,

> "This is my money! Why should I give it to you? I know I gamble, but what about you? Don't you gamble too?"
>
> Lim A-sui: "All right! I'm not going to argue with you. I just have to say something so that people won't think it's all my fault."
>
> Lim Li-kui: "Don't be so shameless! You are always telling people that I lost a lot of money gambling and then sold your clothes to pay my debts. You know how much money I got from you. You don't give me all of the money you make. Aren't you ashamed to say these things?"
>
> Lim A-sui: "There is nothing I can do. You like to gamble so much that I don't dare give you all of the money."
>
> Lim Li-kui: "You are right! I gamble too much! What can you do about it? And what about you? When you were working in Tainan you lost all of the money you made, and so I had to come to the place where you were working and tell you not to gamble anymore. You said you didn't care. You said you could just go with one of the guests there anytime. You didn't have to worry about money. Remember? You said you didn't have to worry about saving money, and you told me that there were lots of women working there older than me! I'm old now, and so I don't care if people laugh at me, but if you say all of these things I can tell you who people are going to laugh at."
>
> Lim A-sui: "The way you talk you make it sound as though I liked to work in that place. But why was it that you wouldn't let me come home when I wanted to quit?"

*593 548 578 Another argument on the same subject a few days later ended with Lim Li-kui threatening her daughter with a cleaver. Lim A-sui simply stood her ground and encouraged her mother, "Kill me! I don't care! Kill me!"

*593 548 208 In most cases in which a daughter dares to quarrel openly with one of her parents, public opinion will be quick to condemn her, but if the girl is a prostitute the tendency is to side with the daughter against her parents. Most village gossips discussing current quarrels between prostitutes and their parents label the parents "selfish" and deserving of whatever ill fortune their fate might bring them. The attitude of the villagers seems to be that while a parent has the right to command a daughter to work as a prostitute they cannot expect the daughter to pay them the respect ordinarily due a parent. It is as though the debt a child owes to her parents is entirely repaid when she submits to such a demand.

*593 *562 548 Prostitution is one way in which a family can use their daughters to obtain heirs and support for their old age, and it is the only way in which a woman who does not marry can provide for herself and her future. Prostitution might therefore be characterized as an
[558] alternative to marriage, but it is always an undesirable alternative. For the prostitute it means anything but a normal life, and for her family there is always some loss of face. Worse yet, for the parents there is always the danger that they are sacrificing as much as they are gaining. In sending a daughter to work they may be able to manage without a marriage in the next generation, but this is accomplished only

*593 *562 548 at the price of their daughter's loyalty and respect. As a result, most families exhaust all other possibilities before finally committing a daughter to prosiitution. Unfortunately, many families find themselves in a position in which there is no alternative. If they do not have a son of marriageable age, and if they cannot find a man who is willing to marry into the family, they have little choice but to avail themselves of this last possibility for security. As those women who are themselves prostitutes recognize when they adopt daughters to inherit their profession, there is no other way in which a single woman can make any substantial contribution to the welfare of her family.

CHAPTER 14

CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTIONS

*121 *597 *583 *592 182 [181] The most important goals in the lives of the people of Hsiachichou set certain requirements for the membership of the family. A man must have descendants to support him in his old age and carry on the family rites after his death. To this end he must somehow obtain children and then see that these children marry and perpetuate his line. The various rules governing the transfer of persons between families offer him alternative ways of achieving these ends. If his wife does not bear him sons, he can either adopt a male child from an agnate or purchase a child, or, if the necessity arises, he can use one of his daughters to bring a son-in-law into the family through a matrilocal marriage. Wives for a man's sons can be adopted as children or brought into the family by means of the preferred form of marriage, and unwanted daughters can be given away as children or allowed to marry out of the family as young adults. By offering alternative ways of achieving important goals the various forms of marriage and adoption create for every family a number of recurring decisions about its membership. We have attempted here to describe the decisions which produced the recent genealogical history of Hsiachichou and also to discover what some of the factors were which made any given choice more or less likely.

One of the most important observations which we might make about these decisions is that they are regular. Rather than being the products of an infinity of conditions reflecting the individuality of each family,

+121 they seem to vary with a limited number of considerations common to all
+591 families. Knowing nothing more than the structure and composition of
+592
+593 the family at the time a decision is made, we can predict with con-
182 siderable confidence the likelihood of their choosing one alternative rather than another. We can say that families with female children and no male children are much less likely to adopt a female child than childless families and families with male children, and we can say that a female child who is born into a family with both male and female children is much more likely to be given away than a girl born into a family with only female children or only male children. The people of Hsiachichou apparently perceive their alternatives in much the same terms and are motivated by common considerations. Only rarely do idiosyncratic judgments occur. We are confident that with more accurate data and more sensitive measures of some variables we would be able to make a limited number of statements which would summarize the great majority of decisions about marriage and adoption made in Hsiachichou during the course of the past sixty years.

Such regularity might be expected if these decisions were made in accordance with prefabricated cultural solutions, but this does not seem to be the case. We are not dealing with obedient responses to cultural norms, but rather with a process which is both conscious and calculated. The villager who decides to adopt a girl to raise as his son's wife does not choose this alternative because this is what his culture tells him to do. He calculates the advantages and disadvantages of the preferred form of marriage, weighs these against the good and

*121 *592 *583 *597 182 bad points of the sīm-pûa form of marriage, and then makes his decision in terms of his own reckoning. His culture sets for him some of his goals and limits his means of achieving these goals, but he decides between the available means as a free agent, depending for his guidance upon his own judgment and his own grasp of the facts. Our problem here has not been to discover why certain cultural solutions have been formulated and why most people accept these solutions; our task has rather been one of why individual village families select one line of action as more advantageous than another.

*121 *583 *597 182 811 An important consideration which enters into any decision about marriage and adoption is the relative cost of the alternatives. We have seen that one of the reasons a poor family is more likely to adopt a sīm-pûa for a son is because it is the cheaper way of obtaining a daughter-in-law, and we have also seen that the costs of raising a child is one of the most common reasons for giving away female children in adoption. Why should this be so? Why should the economic consequences of any choice play such an important role in these decisions? The obvious answer is that Hsiachichou is a poor community in a market economy, but we wonder if this is the whole answer. A universal medium of exchange provides a people with a sensitive scale for comparing the economic consequences of various actions. One can say that buying a male child from a dealer is ten times as expensive as adopting a son from an agnate, and one can compare in a precise way the relative cost of alternative forms of marriage. We wonder if economics would be as important a variable if the people of a community were able to weigh

*121 *583 *597 182 511 some of the other consequences of their actions in a similarly precise manner. We have seen that the relative tension of the in-law relationship within the *kê* is one of the considerations which enters into the choice between the preferred form of marriage and the *sīm-pūà* marriage. Is it not possible that this consideration would carry even more weight in their deliberations if the villagers were able to discuss the relative degrees of tension in quantitative terms? While not denying that economic considerations are an important determinant of human action, we would argue that their importance may be magnified by their clarity, both to the practitioner and his alien observer.

*121 *583 621 182 554 626 Another consideration which often enters into these decisions derives from the fact that marriage and adoption are public acts. Marriage may be thought of as a union between a man and a woman and as an alliance between families, but it must also be considered as taking place in a community. Indeed, in the case of the preferred marriage in Hsiachichou, the event is something more than a public act; it is a public performance. The bride price and the dowry are displayed and carried through the streets; the bride arrives at her husband's home with a procession of friends and relatives; there are several feasts which are attended by hundreds of people; and there are always crowds of onlookers whose primary function is to praise and condemn. As a consequence, a family must always consider what the community is going to say about their decision and the way in which it is implemented. Will they gain face by making this choice rather than that one, or will they be chancing a loss of face? Which alternative would be most likely to enhance their

*121 prestige; which would be most likely to cause them embarrassment?
*583 The importance of these considerations is most evident in the choice
621 182 between the preferred marriage and the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage. The
554 *sīm-pûà* marriage is economically and structurally t[illegible] advantage-
626 ous, and yet the preferred marriage is the more common. Although it
may be that we have overlooked other advantages of the preferred
marriage in our analysis, it would appear that the reason so many vil-
lagers favor this form of marriage is simply that it is the more pres-
tigious way to marry.

*121 If this is indeed the case, it is important for us to discover
*583 why the preferred form of marriage enjoys this favored status. One
554 reason is, of course, that it provides a family with an opportunity
183 182 for display and conspicuous consumption. While the cost of the prefer-
red marriage is one of its greatest disadvantages, it is also one of
its greatest advantages. Nonetheless, this is not the entire answer.
The prestige enjoyed by the preferred marriage is at least in part a
function of the fact that it is considered the correct and proper way
*121 to marry, the natural form of marriage. It is the cultural standard
*583 for all forms of marriage, and all other forms are therefore imperfect
182 183 by comparison. But why should this be the case if the *sīm-pûà* marri-
age is the more advantageous economically and structurally? How is it
that the preferred marriage has become the standard? We raise the
question not because we have the answer, but because we would like to
have the answer. Structural studies have gone a long way towards
specifying the sociological advantages and disadvantages of various

*121 social arrangements, but they have as yet told us very little about
*583 the processes by which one of these forms acquires the advantage of
182 183 precedence. The strongest voice for conservatism in any society is
[626] probably the one which asks, "What will people think?" and it would
seem of particular importance for us to discover how the standards
for public evaluation come into being.

*121 We have seen in the preceding chapters that the three forms of
*583 marriage practices in Hsiachichou create three very different forms of
*592 the family. The structure of the family resulting from the preferred
182 marriage is different from that created by the *sīm-pûà* marriage, and
the structures resulting from the two forms of patrilocal marriage are
again different from those produced by any of the various types of
matrilocal marriage. Perhaps the most important point we have to make
on the basis of our analysis is that these varying forms of the family
are not simply products of decisions about marriage: they are also to
a considerable extent responsible for these decisions. The people of
Hsiachichou are aware of the differences resulting from the three forms
of marriage, and they take these into account in making decision about
*121 the marriages of their sons and daughters. We emphasize this point be-
182 cause we would argue that it is only when the members of a society are
themselves aware of the advantages and disadvantages of any type of
social arrangement that these can be called upon to explain the exist-
ence of such arrangements. Different forms of marriage and adoption
may have different functions and dysfunctions, but these are only
relevant in explaining these practices when they can be counted among

*121 182 the aims of the creators. That certain types of functional analyses have been as successful as they have while ignoring this point is probably only because the analysts have been saved from their teleological assumptions by the analytic abilities of the peoples being studied.

*121 182 *583 829 If we are right in placing this restriction upon the forms of explanation acceptable in social anthropology, it follows that anthropologists should be particularly concerned to discover what the native knows about the functions of his own social system. The native analyst, like the foreign anthropologist, is fallible. He may perceive certain advantages accruing from any given arrangement, but he may miss other equally important disadvantages. The reader may have noticed just such an instance in our description of Hsiachichou. The villager sees the reduced tensions between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law as one of the major advantages of the _sīm-pûà_ form of marriage, but he apparently does not see the dangers of this arrangement for the parent-child relationship. That many village men leave their parental homes for extended periods of time to live with a mistress the average villager is aware, but he does not think of this as a consequence of the _sīm-pûà_ form of marriage, although our analysis indicates that this is much more common among men who marry _sīm-pûà_ than in either of the other two forms of marriage. Why does the villager see the advantages and miss the disadvantages? Are some social consequences more visible than others? And if so, what is it that makes them more or less visible? We would argue that the answer to such questions as these are crucial to an understanding of the origins of social structure.

*121 182 829 An equally important question is raised by the possibility that the native's appreciation of his own social system varies from one society to another. Unlike his counterpart among the lower classes of the West, the Chinese peasant is possessed of an exceptional degree of social sophistication. He can discuss at length the advantages and disadvantages of a variety of forms of marriage and adoption; he is quick to perceive the difference between ideal and actual social systems; and he is capable of calculating with precision the social consequences of any particular line of action. Is it not possible that many other peoples, the aborigines of Australia and Tierra Del Fuegos, for example, are much less sophisticated about their own social system? And if so, is it not then possible that they are less likely to see the advantages and disadvantages of certain types of social arrangements? If this should prove to be the case, explanation appropriate in one society might not be appropriate in another.

*121 182 If such variation does exist, another important task of the social anthropologist is to discover the conditions which give rise to this variation. Why should the Chinese peasant be particularly cognizant of his social environment? One possibility is that it is the result of [867] the opportunities with which he is presented as a child. Unlike the American child, whose parents make an effort to present a united front, the Chinese child has the opportunity to learn that the rules governing his behavior are conditional. His grandmother and grandfather may accept and even approve of behavior which his mother and father will not accept, and his parents will tolerate many abuses which his brothers

*121 and sisters will not tolerate. By the time he is five or six years old
182 the average child has learned that if he tells his mother a playmate bit him he will get punished for fighting, but if he tells the other child's mother he obtains the satisfaction of having his tormentor beaten "to let him see." Perhaps such early experiences lay the foundation for an adult appreciation of the complexities of the social world. If this is the case, an interesting possibility arises. It may then be that the utility of functional analyses in anthropology varies with the extent to which childhood experiences help to produce a socially sophisticated adult.

*121 Aside from determining the extent to which the people of a society
182 are aware of the effects of certain social arrangements, it would also
*583 seem important for the anthropologists to discover how much weight they
*592 give to these effects. While the people of Hsiachichou seem to be
621 602 aware that the three forms of marriage create three different types of affinal ties, they do not seem to attach much value to the potential
[606] advantages and disadvantages of these variations. Although several informants did mention the lack of affinal obligations as one of the advantages of the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage, the more harmonious mother-in-law daughter-in-law relationship was always mentioned as the more salient advantage of such a marriage. In fact, it would seem that the villagers generally consider the internal structure of the family as more important than the nature of the ties between families. It was only in explaining the advantage of village exogamy that our informants commonly referred to inter-family ties, and even here they

*121 seemed more concerned with the effects of these ties upon relations
182 within the family than with the character of the external ties them-
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*592 selves. Rather than choosing their affines from outside the village
621 in order to protect the relations between the two families from the
602 disturbing effects of the mother-in-law daughter-in-law relationship,
the villager wants to keep his affines at a distance so that their presence will not exacerbate relations within the kê. Contrary to the assumption now fashionable in some anthropological circles, it would seem that the people of Hsiachichou favor village exogamy as a means of preserving the family rather than as a means of establishing alliances outside of the community. Perhaps the situation is different among business men and bureaucrats. People of this class would have more to gain from a wide network of social relations and may therefore be more concerned about affinal ties. Insofar as the village of Hsiachichou is concerned, however, marriage is more often thought of in terms of its effect upon the internal structure of the family.

*121 The cost of the alternative arrangements, the prestige they entail,
*583 and their social consequences are probably taken into account in every
*597 decision about marriage and adoption. What decision is actually
*592 reached, however, depends upon at least one further factor: who it is
182 who makes the decisions. Although they may share many of the same
values with regards to the family and its goals, the junior and senior generations of the kê inevitably look at decisions about marriage and adoption from a very different perspective. For the head of the household and his wife, a marriage is a means of acquiring a daughter-in-law,

#121 #583 #592 #597 182 while for their son it is a matter of taking a wife. To the grandparents a decision about female adoption may be simply a question of whether or not to give away one of their several granddaughters, but for the parents it is often a question of giving away their own child and perhaps their only daughter. Since any rearrangement of the structure of the family will necessarily have a different effect upon people who occupy different positions in the household, the decision made about any given alternative will almost always depend upon who in the family makes the decision.

#121 Although this would presumably be the case in any society, consideration of the locus of authority in the family seldom enters into structural analyses of marriage and adoption. Take, for example, the current controversy over the question of cross-cousin marriage. Despite the great bulk of the literature stimulated by the debate, one does not find anywhere an appreciation of the fact that the two contending theories make different assumptions about who is responsible for arranging marriages. Levi-Strauss argues that the matrilateral form of cross-cousin marriage is more common because it has structural advantages for a society with more than two exogamous units.[1] It creates a more generalized exchange of brides than the patrilateral form, and thereby affords the society a greater degree of organic solidarity. Although he does not to the best of our knowledge ever commit himself

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[1] See Claude Levi-Strauss, Les Structures Elementaires de la Parente (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1949).

*121 to such a position, it would seem that Levi-Strauss is thinking of a society in which the senior generations of the family ordinarily arrange marriages. He agrees that it would be necessary for the members of the society to recognize the advantages of a wide network of alliances, and we can see that it would be the older and more experienced members of society who would be most aware of the advantages of such a network. It is usually the mature men and women in any society who occupy positions of formal and informal leadership, and it is naturally people in such positions who are most impressed by the importance of group solidarity. Homans and Schneider, on the other hand, clearly assume that the junior generations of the family arrange their own marriages.[2] A child's attitude towards his mother and father would not have any effect upon the likelihood of his wanting to marry one cousin rather than another unless he himself were making the decision. Although it is outside the scope of the present discussion to pursue the idea any further, we would at least suggest that the two theories may not really be in conflict. In a society in which it is the parents who arrange marriages Levi-Strauss' structural argument may be the better explanation, and in the society in which the younger people arrange their own marriages, Homans and Schneider's view may be the more appropriate.

178 *383 *393 *121 182 We have seen that as the senior generation of the family gradually lost control of decisions about marriage and adoption the frequency of

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[2] See George C. Homans and David M. Schneider, Marriage, Authority, and Final Causes: A Study of Unilateral Cross-Cousin Marriage (New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1955).

*121 the *sīm-pûa* marriage dropped sharply. While more than a third of all
*583 marriages made in the years before 1930 were of this variety, there have
*593 only been two such marriages in the years after 1930. Since this change
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182 was a direct consequence of the younger generation's dislike of the *sīm-pûa* form of marriage, we can say that the causes of their distaste are also among the determinants of the present social structure of
[602] Hsiachichou. A higher frequency of *sīm-pûa* marriages in the village in
[606] the preceding thirty years would have meant weaker affinal ties for
[639] many families, a more harmonious relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, a less satisfactory husband-wife relationship, and probably a much higher frequency of extra-marital relations. By refusing to marry their foster siblings the younger generations of the village brought about a sharp change in both the internal and external relations of their community. Why then did the younger generations of
*121 the family reject the *sīm-pûa* form of marriage? In our earlier discussion we considered two possible explanations. As Edward Westermarck's view of the incest taboo suggests, it may be that the intimacy which obtains between foster siblings results in their having an aversion to sexual relations; or it may be that the social identification of foster siblings as "brother" and "sister" provides the basis for an inadvertent generalization of the incest taboo. We cannot decide between the two hypotheses on the basis of these data alone, since the two crucial variables are confounded. The parties to a *sīm-pûa* marriage always grow up in intimate association, and they are also always identified as "brother" and "sister." There are, however, other data which indicate that the

12) first of these two hypotheses is to be preferred. As J.R. Fox points out in an article defending Westermarck's position, animal experiments by F.A. Beach show some characteristics pertinent to our argument.[3] In the most important of these experiments Beach found that male rats reared in isolation from birth tended to copulate more readily than male rats raised with females prior to maturity. "Thus propinquity resulted in aversion, separation in strong desire."[4]

With human organisms things are, of course, in many ways more complicated, and yet there is also evidence which indicates that childhood association is sufficient to produce sexual aversion among human beings. The most convincing case is that of mate selection in the Israeli kibbutzim. As with foster siblings in Hsiachichou, the peer group of the typical kibbutz experience intimate and prolonged association as children. In a kibbutz which he calls Kiryat Yedidim, Melford Spiro found that until they are five or six years of age "boys and girls sleep in the same room, shower together, sit on the toilet together, and often run around nude before getting dressed in the morning or after being undressed in the evening."[5] Until only recently joint sleeping and bathing arrangements continued until the children were on the verge of puberty. But while the experiences of the peer group in

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[3] J.R. Fox, "Sibling Incest," The British Journal of Sociology, XIII (June 1962), 2, p. 132.

[4] Ibid., p. 132.

[5] Melford E. Spiro, Children of the Kibbutz (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), p. 221.

*121 the kibbutz thus fulfill the condition of prolonged and intimate association, there is in this case no basis for the generalization of the incest taboo. The children of a peer group do not address one another as "brother" and "sister;" they do not share common parents or grandparents; nor are they encouraged by the ideology of the Kibbutz Movement to think of one another as spiritual siblings. Sexual intercourse is discouraged among them as children and teenagers, but these restrictions do not extend beyond graduation from high school. "Once the sabras leave their own Mose, at approximately eighteen years of age, it is their private concern, and they are free to do as they please."[6] That "in not one instance has a sabra from Kiryat Yedidim married a fellow sabra" would,[7] then, seem to be strong evidence in favor of Westermarck's hypothesis. According to Spiro, fellow sabras do "view each other, they say, as siblings," but he specifically notes that "by stating that they view each other as siblings the sabras do not mean to imply...that they therefore view any sexual relationship between them as incestuous. They mean, rather that they, like biological siblings, have no sexual interest in one another."[8]

The same pattern of relationships is also evident in three kibbutzim studied by Yonina Talmon.[9] Here again we find "very close

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[6] *Ibid.*, p. 347.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 347.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 347-48.

[9] Yonina Talmon, "Mate Selection in Collective Settlements." A revised version of the paper quoted here will appear in *The American Sociological Review*, August 1964.

*121 propinquity and very intensive interaction between peers of different sexes."[10] "Members of the peer groups eat, study, work and play together as a group most hours of the day and sleep together in the same room or in adjoining rooms at night."[11] Moreover, we find that "the tendency to out-group mate selection of the second generation in the Kibbutz is not backed by any formal or informal prescriptions or proscriptions and it is not buttressed by any institutionalized sanctions or inducements."[12] The rare cases of marriage within the same peer group "attract attention and comment but are not considered in any sense illegitimate or irregular."[13] Indeed, it would seem to be to the contrary, for the author notes that "not only do we observe a complete lack of proscription or negative evaluation of intra-second generation marriage, but as far as a large segment of the parents' generation is concerned it is a preferred pattern."[14] And again marriage between members of the same peer group is rare if not entirely absent. According to the author, "Among the 125 couples examined by us, there was not one instance in which both mates were reared from birth in the same peer group."[15] As Westermarck would have expected,

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[10] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

[11] *Ibid.*, p. 28.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

*121 "the relations between adult members of the second generation are friendly and familiar but devoid of any signs of erotic tension. Members of the second generation view their relations with each other as 'sexless' and erotically indifferent."[16]

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182 It would therefore seem that intimate and prolonged childhood association is alone sufficient to produce sexual aversion, and that our best interpretation of the younger generations rejection of the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage is in terms of the Westermarck hypothesis. If this is indeed the situation, we then have a clear case in which a major readjustment of a social structure can only be accounted for with reference to psychological variables. Like the first generation of the kibbutzim, who prefer endogamy because of its advantages for social continuity, the parents of Hsiachichou often chose the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage over the preferred marriage for structural reasons. Once the younger generations came to have a voice in arranging their own marriages, however, they rejected the *sīm-pûà* form of marriage, being either averse or indifferent to the thought of sexual relations with a sibling. As a result, a type of social structure which had real sociological advantages disappeared because it did not satisfy the personal needs of some members of the society. The social anthropologist who arbitrarily limits himself to a sociological analysis takes the chance that the effects of these variables may be submerged by the influence of factors outside the scope of his analysis.

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[16] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

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We began our analysis with the hope of discovering why it is the people of Hsiachichou choose one form of marriage or adoption rather than another. Why do some families give their female children away in adoption, while others choose to raise them and allow them to marry out of the family in the preferred way? Why do some families adopt female children while others do not? It may have occurred to the reader that in asking such questions as these we are putting the cart before the horse. Perhaps a family first chooses a husband or a wife for their son or daughter and then arranges whatever form of marriage they can in order to make this match. Having decided that they would like to ally themselves with a particular Tan family, an Ong family with a male child might first find out what arrangement can be made with the Tans to obtain their daughter in marriage. If the Tans prefer to give their daughter away as a child, the Ong family can then adopt the girl as a sīm-pûa. On the other hand, if the Tans do not want to see their daughter leave the family at such an early age, the Ongs might have to wait to arrange a preferred marriage when the children are older. Again, a young man who has reached marriageable age might meet and fall in love with a particular girl, and then make whatever marriage he could to obtain her as his wife. If her parents would allow her to marry out of the family, he would probably take her as a wife in the preferred way, but if for some reason her parents would not allow her to marry out of the family, he might then make a matrilocal marriage. Although our own society does not allow alternatives in the matter of marriage, our conception of marriage leads us to expect this ordering

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of decisions. We tend to think of the choice of the particular person as the first and major consideration, and of all other decisions as secondary and relatively minor.

This is also, on occasion, the situation in Hsiachichou. We know one case in which a man did marry into his wife's family because she could not marry out of the family, and we also know of a family which adopted a female child simply because the wife had become very fond of the girl. More commonly, however, the family first decides how they want to arrange the membership of their household, and they then look for a way in which this can be managed. The decision about the form of marriage or adoption usually precedes and takes precedence over the choice of the particular person or family. That this is the case is indicated by the analysis we have already presented. If the choice of the form of marriage or adoption followed from the choice of the particular person or family, we would not have been able to predict these decisions in terms of the advantages and disadvantages of the alternative forms. Although considerations of this kind might enter into any marriage or adoption, they would not carry the weight necessary to produce the relationships we have discovered. We emphasize the point because we feel that it is evidence of the way in which the average villager thinks of marriage and adoption. They are first of all types of social arrangements with certain advantages and disadvantages, and only secondarily matters of love and sentiment. The villager with children first thinks of the various ways in which they could marry, and only when this question is settled does he turn his attention to

*121 *583 *597 182 the question of the persons they should marry. To the people of Hsiachichou marriage and adoption are less matters of personal attraction than instruments of family purpose.

*121 While it has not been our aim here to evaluate previous studies of the Chinese family, it is perhaps appropriate to conclude with one remark on the subject. Not a few anthropologists have come to regard the study of the Chinese family as a closed book, the assumption being that the major outlines and aspects of the family are now understood. The young anthropologist is urged to move on to the study of the bureaucracy, the city, the articulation of the peasantry and the elite, and above all, of course, the social organization of Communist China. While we heartily agree with the need for further studies of these subjects, we would include the family as an equally important topic for further research. Although there is a sizeable literature dealing with the traditional family, it is neither complete nor in many cases accurate, hardly the kind of scholarship on which to close the book. The village of Hsiachichou is not unusual in practicing a variety of forms of marriage, and yet the great bulk of the literature does not deal with any form of the family other than that resulting from the preferred form of marriage. The most recent of these, Marion Levy's The Family in Modern China,[17] analyzes in detail the structure created by the preferred marriage, but does not even mention the existence of other forms of the family. The best of the community studies do mention the occurrence of some of the alternative forms of marriage, but

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[17] Marion J. Levy, The Family Revolution in Modern China (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949). See also Olga Lang, Chinese Family and Society (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1946).

*121 with the notable exception of Fei Hsiao-tung's Peasant Life in China we look in vain for any analysis of the resulting structures.[16] Aside from the fact that we have yet to understand a large percentage of the families of any Chinese community, we also have as yet to exploit what is perhaps our best research strategy. If we have accomplished nothing else in this work, we hope to have at least demonstrated that a comparison of the various types of family is one of the best roads to an understanding of any given type, affording us clear perspective from which to determine the forces acting in the formation of the family.

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[16] Hsiao-tung Fei, Peasant Life in China, op. cit.

2:Wolf E-5 (1958-1961) 1964 AD5 Taiwan Hokkien AD5
Hsiachichou

A LIST OF CHINESE WORDS AND TERMS IN THE TEXT

I. Linguistic Forms

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biẽng-liẽng-kìa:	螟蛉子
bōu ì-sú	無意思
bōu tùi-tháu	無頭對
būe	賣
bùe	買
cǎ-bô-kàn	婠媒嫺
chĭ	Not known
ciōu-zîp	招入
chŭa-chŭt	娶出
cùe-khĕq	做客
hôu-mīa:	好名
kâ-tlu:	家長
kê	家

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kìan-siǎu	見笑
kōng-thîa:	公庭
kùe-páng-kìa:	過房子
lǎu-zìat	鬧熱
liâu-cĭ:-hǒe	Not known
lông-lù	養女
lún	Not known
pâi-mĩa:	壞名
pôu-pǔe	Not known
sàng-cùe-tûi	Not known
sīn-pûa	媳婦仔
ǔ tùi-tháu	有頭對

II. Place Names in Taiwan

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Chichou	溪州
Fantzupu	番子埔
Hsiachichou	下溪州
Hsinchu	新竹

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103	Hsulin	樹林
	Keelung	基隆
	Keelung River	基隆河
	Panchiao	板橋
	Taipei	臺北
	Taiwan	臺灣
	Tamsui River	淡水河
	Sanhsia	三峽
	Shalun	沙崙
	Shantzuchiao	山子脚
	Tucheng	土城
	Wanhua	萬華

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GLOSSARY

biĕng-liĕng-kiá	adopted male child from a non agnate
bōu ī-sǔ	"meaningless", "dull"
bōu tùi-tháu	"those who have not counterparts" (term for the adopted daughter, employed in the context of marriage status)
būe	"sold" (giving the male child in adoption to a non agnate)
bùe	"bought" (receiving the male child in adoption from a non agnate)
cā-bô-kàn	"female servant" (girl adopted as a domestic)
chī	the act of adoption of a male child by agnates
ciōu-zîp	"having been called in" (a man married into his wife's family)
chǔa-chǔt	"left the family" (a woman married out of her family)
cuè-khěq	"being a guest" (ceremony of the first visit of the bride to her natal family)
hōu-miā	"good fortune", "good name"
kā-tiù:	"head of the household"
kê	"family" (nuclear, stem or extended family)
kiàn-siǎu	"embarrassing"
kōng-thiā	"court" (largest room in the house with the family altar)

kùe-páng-kia	adopted male child from an agnate
lǎu-ziȃt	"noise", "enthusiasm"
liȃu-cǐ:-hǔe	"something to lose money on" (term for a female infant)
lông-lù	"adopted daughter" (not committed to marry the son of her foster parents)
lún	"areas" (divisions which make up the locally recognized district)
pȃi-miȃ:	"bad fortune", "bad name"
pôu-pǔe	"treasure" (term used for a male infant)
sàng-cùe-tûi	"pushing them together" (brief New Year wedding ceremony with a "sîm-pûà")
sîm-pûà	"little daughter-in-law" (adopted girl committed to marry the son of her foster parents)
ǔ tùi-tháu	"those who have counterparts" (term for the "sîm-pûà" employed in the context of her marriage status)

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[For information on *kê* in the village of Hsiachichou, *passim*, see category 116, pp. 28-33, 84-105, 134-162, 207-225, 260 and 269-279.]

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[For data on adoption in the village of Hsiachichou, passim, see category 116, pp. 1-8, 39-105, and 121-288.]

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[For the relationship between the foster and the natal family of an adopted child, see category 593.]

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583

[For modes of marriage, especially in relation to rules of residence and initiation of common residence in the village of Hsiachichou, passim, see category 116, pp. 1-8, 40-98, 127-133, 165-246, and 251-288.]

121

[For theoretical orientation on social institutions, specifically marriage and adoption in the village of Hsiachichou, see category 116, pp. 1-18, 37-40, 84-86, 140-142, 183-199, and 269-289.]

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[For sex status, primarily that of females in the village of Hsiachichou, passim, see category 116, pp. 78, 98, 99, 117, 123-162, and 193-268.

584

[For data on arranging a marriage in the village of Hsiachichou, passim, see category 116, pp. 44-129, 163-216, 221-222, and 244-259.]

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[For additional information relating to rules of residence, see category 583 and 584.]

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[For information on family relationships in the village of Hsiachichou, passim, see category 116, pp. 57-131, 138-139, 150-212, and 233-281.]